

MINUTES

21st Century Transportation Task Force

April 1, 2008
3-5 PM

Council Committee Room, 9th Floor

Type of meeting:

Sixth Task Force Meeting

Attendees:

Councilor Isaac Benton, Mike Skaggs, Claude Luisada, Claude Morelli, Moises Gonzalez (absent), Jeffrey Peterson, Antonio Sandoval, Charles Ivy (absent), Terry Keene, Gary Bodman, Nevin Harwick, Alex Romero, Bert Thomas (absent), Bob Murphy, Brent Wilson, Chris Blewett, Clovis Acosta (absent), Cynthia Reinhart (absent), Dale Lockett (absent), Jeannie Chavez (absent), Joanne McEntire, Joel Wooldridge, JW Madison, Martin Sandoval, Ralph Cipriani, Frank Burcham, Gus Grace (absent)

Resource Persons:

Andrew de Garmo, Michael Riordan, John Castillo, Tom Menicucci, Kara Shair-Rosenfield, Mandi Hinojos, Mike Smith, Tony Sylvester, Ted Shogry

Observers:

Joni Thompson (for Dale Lockett of the ACVB), Jamie Welles (Indicators Progress Commission), Silvio Dell-Angela

AGENDA TOPICS

Welcome

Councilor Benton

Discussion: Councilor Benton called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Councilor Benton

Discussion: Councilor Benton moved to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Councilor Benton moved to approve the minutes from the 3-4-08 meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion: Nathan Masek, a transportation planner for the Mid-Region Council of Governments, gave a presentation on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). He explained that ITS can be used to improve traffic flows and increase safety and system efficiency in a cost-effective way. He told the group that there is currently \$116 million in the Long-Range Plan for ITS projects, including \$44.4 million in the TIP, and that everyone from the City of Rio Rancho and the NM Dept. of Transportation to the City of Albuquerque’s Municipal Development and Transit Departments are stakeholders in the coordination and implementation of ITS. Members asked the following questions:

1. Brent Wilson: How well developed are sensors at this time?

Nathan Masek said that they are in the process of assessing the current level of deployment. There are 17 DOT camera locations on the interstates; the City of Albuquerque has a handful of cameras; Rio Rancho has some cameras, too. A map of deployments will be available in a few months.

2. Brent Wilson: What is the timeline for implementing ITS?

Nathan responded that it depends on funding. A significant amount of deployment has occurred in the past few years, and NMDOT has embraced ITS.

3. JW Madison: Can ITS be used to better coordinate the timing of traffic signals, especially daytime vs. nighttime?

Nathan said that he would defer to someone from DMD to answer that question, as it deals with an operational issue. He offered, however, that from the perspective of doing ITS planning, one of the priorities is to identify priority corridors and optimize their efficiency. He also said that there exist opportunities to improve the operation of the whole system and that you get more bang for your buck than, say, increasing the number of lanes.

John Castillo, Director of DMD, said that there’s always room for improvement and the City has been working for several years to coordinate signals. He informed the group that there are already three different settings – rush hour, off-peak, and night – that are used to time signals. He also said that it is very complicated to adjust signals because of the multitude of factors (spacing of signals, pedestrians, pre-emption for the Fire Dept., etc.) that influence how a street functions. He mentioned that DMD has thought about developing a brochure that explains timing and the synchronization of signals to the public.

4. Councilor Benton: Are you familiar with the Arizona highway system and their 511 number?

Nathan said that the NMDOT has an 800 number, and they’re working on pursuing an even better system.

5. Chris Blewett added that the biggest benefit of ITS is that the traveling public gets good information in a timely manner, which can really improve a transportation system. He said that it can be hard to quantify the effect of ITS, but it’s an important tool.

General Group Discussion: Establishing a Vision Statement (small groups)

Discussion: Mike Smith from the City’s HR Training Division facilitated the remainder of the meeting. He started by asking the members to write down five statements that capture their vision of what a successful transportation system in Albuquerque in 20 years would look like. Mike then asked each member to keep three of the statements they had written and exchange two of them with another member of the Task Force. After exchanging statements and reviewing their new group of five statements, members were asked to keep three statements and give two to Mike.

Mike then split the group into five groups of four. Each group was asked to review the statements that each member in the group had decided to keep and select a total of five statements for the group to keep. All other statements were given to Mike. The complete list of statements that were turned in to Mike is as follows:

- Ease in moving around
- Transportation system supports economic vitality of the area
- Albuquerque is an economic success story. We have attracted high paying jobs because we were able to see the future 20 years ago and we planned well as we prepared to move people around the city.
- Regionally coordinated inter-modal systems with convenient transfers among modes
- Transportation systems stimulate/creates funding for improvement and expansion of system
- Area wide transit –Light Rail
- More compact urban form; more mixed-use area in activity centers and major corridors
- Separation of commercial and passenger traffic
- Bicycle Blvds. are developed in a network that is parallel to transit streets/great streets
- 15-20 years ahead in time:
 - Gas at 8-10 per gal/alternative fuels
 - Cars with MPG's of 50-60
- Higher gas price – higher demand for public transportation
- Safe/efficient transportation options available
- Complete system network of bike/pedestrian trails
- Great streets provide models of streets that are places for movement and people –oriented activities in 10 sites
- Sustainability
- Public transportation that runs on renewable resources
- Bus routes are active on all neighborhood collector and higher classified roadways
- Smaller road system with transportation alternatives
- Less urban sprawl (more efficient planning)
- More transit river crossings
- Less individually operated vehicles
- More accessible and efficient public transportation
- Paradigm shift –how we think about transportation
- Transportation costs are less than 10% of household income
- Greatly improved transit connections
- Most kids are walking to school
- Better street layout in new areas
- Complete and convenient inter-modal connections
- There is a charge for all parking in city limits
- Environmentally friendly transportation system with less cars on road
- Recognizes changing demographics moving toward an “older” population with special needs
- Work, school, and home closer together for many people
- Elementary aged kids walk to school
- A safe city
- Orderly growth and development
- Safe, efficient, affordable transportation
- Transportation system moves people, commodities and data (enhanced fiber optics along corridors)
- Lots of bicycling and walking
- Street cars powered by renewable energy
- Commuter and light rail powered by renewable energy
- Increased population, increased density, increased use of public transportation
- Park and ride service increased
- Informs residents (and visitors) of the importance of and accessibility to transportation systems connecting us to the global marketplace
- 5am -1am transit service on all major corridors
- Our air is crystal clear
- Expanded transit system ahead of new construction
- More bike/paths/traffic lanes for bikes
- Expanded light rail system to 2 major corridors (1 east/west & 1 north/south)
- Card readers for buses to request pick-ups from bus stops
- Greatly improved Para transit service

- Residents and visitors can move easily, safely and comfortably throughout ABQ using public transit
- Space age technology that replaces airplane travel
- An elevated (above road surface) public transportation system
- Safe, efficient, affordable, multi-modal transportation system (including bike, walk, ride, and bus)
- Land use/zoning
- Access to public transportation for all who need it or care to use it
- Safe walking and bicycling routes for children to go to school, people to go to work, or for basic desire to go from point A to point B
- A healthier population that includes exercise as a part of their travel through the city
- Transportation network facilitates economic development
- Small transit units available near everyone
- Comprehensive multi-modal transit system
- Regional coordination
- Transportation decision are prioritized based on numbers to be served
- The average work week is four days
- Bicycle storage facilities near all transit nodes
- More condensed neighborhoods
- More trips taken by public transit, walking, biking
- Convenient and wide spread mass transportation
- Multiple transportation choices for daily travel
- Higher density in select areas
- Compact urban forms for the region permits safe and efficient non-auto access to many destinations resulting in:
 - Efficient land use
 - Fuel/energy conservation
 - Reductions in VMT
 - Reduction in household transportation costs
- Thorough distribution of attractive transit shelters
- Hub centers – destination areas

Each group used their five statements to develop a Vision Statement. The following are the results of this exercise:

Group 1 (Isaac Benton, Chris Blewett, Joanne McEntire, Mike Skaggs)

- **Vision Statement:** Dramatically reduce the need for travel while increasing opportunities and choices for residents and visitors to reach their destinations.
 - 90% of all trips are within 3 miles of their origins.
 - Residential/commercial density along major corridors to support transit.
 - Managed lanes, dedicated lanes, and queue jumpers on all major streets.
 - Transit in activity centers and major nodes in scheduled in sync with shelters and ITS.
 - Pedestrians are fully accommodated –full crosswalks, sidewalks, intersections at all transit nodes.

Group 2 (Frank Burcham, Ralph Cipriani, Jeffrey Peterson, Joel Wooldridge)

- **Vision Statement:** Increased spending on all forms of inter-modal transportation (choices), including efficient/well-maintained roadway system, leading to less dependence on private car trips and providing greater access to all.
 - Direct/efficient (safe) connections between bike/pedestrian network and vehicle network.
 - Increased spending on all forms of transit due to public demand.
 - Much less dependence on private car trips.
 - Provides “access” to all citizens, provides “choices” of mode to many.
 - Efficient, well-maintained roadway system.

Group 3 (Terry Keene, Claude Luisada, Claude Morelli, Bob Murphy)

- **Vision Statement:** We envision a transportation system that:

- Provides abundant options and viable alternatives to the car.
- Is affordable (both to users and community).
- Is clean, safe, predictable, and convenient.
- Is accessible to everyone.
- Is geographically extensive.
- Public transportation is world class and has stable funding.
- People are walking in large numbers throughout the city –our streets are designed for people, not just cars.
- More efficient bus system, hybrid fuel systems, higher usage based on comparative transportation costs/cultural shift.
- Extensive rail with connections to residential communities that transport people anywhere they want to go.
- More efficient autos, hybrid/alternative fuels, adequate, expanded efficient highway systems.

Group 4 (JW Madison, Alex Romero, Joni Thompson, Brent Wilson)

- **Vision Statement:** Vision is to provide a safe and efficient and affordable multi-modal transportation system that supports the economic viability of the area, protects the environment, while moving people, commodities, and data. Inform users of the importance and accessibility of these systems.
 - Renewable energy sources for transportation.
 - Completely connected transportation network allowing choice of bike, walk, drive, or bus.
 - Transportation is environmentally sensitive coordinated with renewable sources and appropriate land use patterns.
 - Safe, efficient, affordable transportation options.
 - Increased use of public transit through public education.

Group 5 (Gary Bodman, Nevin Harwick, Antonio Sandoval, Martin Sandoval)

- **Vision Statement:** A sustainable, comprehensive and safe transportation system with destination hubs and regional coordination. This vision cannot be accomplished without creating higher density land uses.
 - Sustainability
 - Land use and zoning laws have been changed to create high density 730 DU/AC areas within the city.
 - Regional coordination.
 - Comprehensive and multi-modal transit system.
 - Destination hubs

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| | General Discussion: Establishing a Vision Statement (large group) | |
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Discussion: After each group reported back, the whole group decided to use Group 1's Vision Statement as a starting point for further discussion and development of the Task Force's Vision Statement. Together, the group went through the other four Vision Statements and identified key words that they might want to try to incorporate into Group 1's statement. Twenty-five words were selected by the group and listed by Mike on the flip chart. Mike suggested that they narrow the list down to the top eight words; each member was allowed to vote for his or her top eight choices. The results of the vote are as follows:

- **Regional: 12**
- Efficient: 6
- **Accessible: 12**
- Sustainable: 5
- Greater Access: 0
- Inter-Jurisdictional: 0
- Increased Spending: 0
- **Land Use: 8**
- **Affordable: 11**
- Options: 1
- Extensive: 1
- **Convenient: 10**
- **Safe: 15**
- Clean: 3
- Tied to Renewable Energy: 0
- Informed Users: 1
- **Environmentally Sensitive: 12**
- Economic Viability: 6
- Reliable: 7
- **Multi-Modal: 8**
- Now: 0
- Comprehensive: 2
- Destination Hubs: 2
- Density: 2

The group gave itself the homework assignment of taking the agreed-upon, base Vision Statement (Group 1's) and the top eight Key Words and drafting a revised Vision Statement that incorporates any or all of the adjectives before the next meeting.

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| | Agenda for Next Meeting | |
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Discussion: Councilor Benton said that Chris Blewett informed him that the streetcar consultants are ready to present to the Task Force again. He asked everyone if they were okay with having another presentation at the next meeting. Chris Blewett said it would only take about half-an-hour. It was agreed that the streetcar consultants will present during the second half of the next Task Force meeting, which is scheduled for Tuesday, April 15, 3 PM.

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| | Scheduling of Next Meeting; Adjourn | |
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Discussion: The next meeting of the Task Force will be on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, 3-5 PM, in the City Council Committee Room on the 9th Floor of City Hall. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.