

**GREAT FALLS METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS  
POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 14, 2012**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) meeting was called to order at 2:27 P.M. in the Rainbow Room of the City Civic Center by Chair Jane Weber.

**ROLL CALL & ATTENDANCE**

PCC Members present:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title/Representing</u>
Jane Weber, Chair	Cascade County Commissioner
Carl Donovan	Chairman, Great Falls Transit District Board
Bill Roberts	Chair, Great Falls Planning Advisory Board
Mick Johnson	District Administrator, Montana Dept. of Transportation-Great Falls
Fred Burow	Commissioner, City of Great Falls

PCC Members absent/not represented:

Pete Fontana	Chairman, Cascade County Planning Board
Lloyd Rue, for Kevin McLaury	Federal Highway Administration

**OTHERS PRESENT**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title/Representing</u>
Andrew Finch	Sr. Transp. Planner, Planning & Community Development
Wendy Thomas	Deputy Director, Planning & Community Development
Galen Amy	Planner I, Planning & Community Development
Jim Rearden	Director, Public Works Department
Jim Helgeson	General Manager, Great Falls Transit District
Shyla Patara	North Central Independent Living Services

**MINUTES**

Prior to the meeting, PCC members were provided a copy of the minutes of the last PCC meeting held September 19, 2012.

MOTION: That the Policy Coordinating Committee minutes of September 19, 2012 be approved.

Made by: Mr. Donovan

Second: Mr. Roberts

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

Provided for each item listed under this agenda heading was a written report for PCC consideration. A copy of each is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

Item 5A. FFY 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #1

Mr. Finch explained that the TIP is a capital improvements program for all expenditures for improvements to be made to our roadway system or projects that will use transportation funds. It is the implementing tool of the Great Falls Transportation Plan, so it needs to be kept up to date to ensure that we are effectively spending the dollars we have. The last time it was updated was about six months ago. This is a full blown amendment because we're adding projects and dollars that affect the fiscal constraint of the TIP. The list of eight projects are summarized in the agenda report. The majority are minor projects that come from MDT, which are pavement, safety or interstate projects. There are some projects that are high dollar, but only a fraction are going to be in the Great Falls area.

Some other changes to the TIP are funding. Funding has been identified and clarified in the TIP. The air quality and urban funds are higher than what was projected in 2011. The changes are mainly found in Table 4 to track new projects added, and funding categories or phases that have shifted from year to year. The reason for the change is in bold or italics. Table 2 has been updated for costs that we now know about, and more accurate projections for remaining years of the TIP. Cost estimates are updated in Table 1 for priority projects. No priorities have been shifted and new projects have been added in the 'other' category. Also, some projects are complete and some have come in cheaper than projected.

Great Falls Transit District received a grant that will allow veterans to schedule transportation across the state by being able to contact each public agency online. They are opening it up to the general public. They also received capital improvement grants that will also eventually go towards buses. The final recommendation is contributing MACI air quality funds to the portion of the Bootlegger project that is in the Urban Limits, amounting to \$460,000. Mr. Burow asked how air quality fits in with transportation. Mr. Finch explained that reducing congestion and idling times in turn reduces emissions, and bike/ped projects get people out of their vehicles and reduce emissions with less vehicles on the road. The Bootlegger project will improve traffic flow and reduce idling times, which is how it qualifies for these funds. TAC has also recommended approval for funding this project.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Weber called for a motion.

MOTION: To approve the 2011-2012 TIP Amendment #1, including the \$460,000 in MACI funds for the Bootlegger project.

Made by: Mr. Burow  
Second: Mr. Roberts

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Item 5B. Addition of 24th Avenue South to the Urban System

Mr. Finch explained that there are roadways with classifications, which serve as a hierarchy of function. For example, there are local roadways, collector roadways, major and minor arterials, up to the interstate level. Classifications help transportation planners and road managers manage the roadway. Somewhat similarly there is a highway system classification which helps both the state and the federal government expend their monies. Both the state and federal government have divvied transportation funds up into various pots. The Urban Highway System is a designated pot of money that comes to the Great Falls area as a prioritized pot of money. PCC has input on how those funds are spent. The Urban funds may be spent on projects that are on the Urban Highway System.

The segment of 24th Avenue South, between 13th Street South and 26th Street South, has been classified as a minor arterial. It is part of the main system of roadways that moves people around the community. It is the only arterial roadway that is not on the federal aid system, so it is not eligible for federal funds. With the improvement project that is scheduled to take place on that section, TAC recommends PCC ask MDT to add this section to the Federal Aid System. This would go to the state Transportation Commission, and they have the final say.

Mr. Donovan asked if we add this, would it mean that there would be more money allocated to Great Falls. Mr. Finch stated there would not be, but the road would become eligible to use federal aid dollars. Ms. Weber asked if TAC was strongly in favor of requesting that this road be added to the Federal Aid System. Mr. Finch confirmed that they are. Mr. Burow stated that roadway needs improvements and it makes sense to have it be eligible for additional sources of funds.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Weber called for a motion.

**MOTION:** The Policy Coordinating Committee determines 24th Avenue South between 13th and 26th Streets South should be added to the Urban Highway System, and directs staff to request such designation by the Montana Transportation Commission.

There being no further discussion, Ms. Weber called for a vote.

Made by: Mr. Donovan  
Second: Mr. Burow

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Johnson mentioned that 24th Avenue South is a project that is getting rather expensive and recommended that those involved in the planning process be aware that more right-of-way needs to be incorporated. Mr. Johnson stated that the same case will be true for Fox Farm Road, and that homes will be affected. Mr. Burow asked if the right-of-way has changed in width, and Mr. Johnson stated that when it is built it will.

Mr. Finch stated that there will be a preliminary design available around March 2013 for the 24th Avenue South project, and he can ask the consultant to give a presentation to PCC if they are interested. They stated that they are.

Ms. Weber said she can discuss with the County Commission her staying on PCC another year. Mr. Burow stated that the County Commission should make their decision and let PCC know what they would like to do. Mr. Finch stated that the City Commission decided to appoint a Designee to PCC in 2005 instead of having to change frequently, and Ms. Weber stated she would keep that in mind when she speaks with the County.

Ms. Weber also stated that for the 2nd Avenue North CTEP project, near Malmstrom Air Force Base, striping will be completed spring 2013 to incorporate bike lanes on both sides. Mr. Johnson asked if the City is in agreement to extend the bike lanes to 38th, and Mr. Finch confirmed that they are.

Ms. Weber thanked Mr. Roberts and Mr. Johnson for their service and wished them both luck. Mr. Roberts stated that his replacement will be Thor Swensson.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Thomas stated that the work for the Downtown Access and Circulation Plan is ongoing. The consultant has developed some very preliminary roadway sections of what could be done downtown. They are looking into how they can fit things into the right-of-way, like additional parking and streetscapes improvements. The Preliminary Parking Study is waiting for her comments and they are developing a metric scale of how changes would impact Downtown in several different areas. Ms. Weber asked if there would be a final presentation by the consultant and asked if PCC could be notified so members could be present. Ms. Thomas said there would be and that she would keep PCC informed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mr. Burow made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Roberts. The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.