

GREAT FALLS URBAN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS  
**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2011

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jim Rearden, Chairman, called the Great Falls Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. in the Gibson Room of the Great Falls Civic Center.

**ROLL CALL OF TAC MEMBERS & ATTENDANCE**

TAC Members Present/Represented:

Brian Clifton	Public Works Director, Cascade County
Susan Conell	Planning Director, Cascade County
Dave Dobbs	City Engineer, City of Great Falls
Andrew Finch	Sr. Trans. Planner, City of Great Falls
Aaron Jewett (for John Hale)	Deputy Base Civil Engineer, MAFB
Jason Handl	Transportation/SID Eng., City of Great Falls
Mike Haynes	Planning & Community Development Director, City of Great Falls
Jim Helgeson	Manager, Great Falls Transit District
Jerry McKinley	Traffic Supervisor, City of Great Falls
Jim Rearden	Public Works Director, City of Great Falls
Dave Sutton	Road Superintendent, Cascade County
Bruce Treis (for Sandy Johnson)	Envir. Health Specialist, City-County Health Dept.
Jim Turnbow	Street Supervisor, City of Great Falls
Robert Vosen	Construction Operations Engineer GF Dist- MDT
Jerilee Weibel	Right-of-Way Supervisor, GF District- MDT

TAC Members Absent/Not Represented:

John Faulkner	Manager, Great Falls International Airport
Rina Fontana-Moore	County Surveyor, Cascade County
Zia Kazimi	Urban Planning, MDT-Helena
Lloyd Rue (non-voting)	Operations Engineer, FHWA-Helena
Dave Gabbert	Manager, FAA – Helena Airport District

No members of the public were present.

**MINUTES**

Prior to the meeting, Committee members were provided a copy of the January 13, 2011, TAC meeting minutes.

MOTION: That the minutes of January 13, 2011 be approved.

Made by: Mr. Dobbs  
Second: Mr. Haynes

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

Prior to the meeting, TAC members were provided with copies of the TAC meeting agenda. Copies of the agenda and handout materials are attached and incorporated by reference.

### Addition to FFY 2009-2013 TIP Amendment #3

Mr. Finch presented an overview of the proposed addition to the TIP Amendment #3, explaining that the Black Eagle Road Reconstruction project has been designed and is now anticipated to extend into the Transportation Study Area. Because of that, it now must be in the TIP. Mr. Finch said the Planning Board approved the addition of the project to Amendment #3, and PCC will consider the entire Amendment #3, including the additional project if TAC agrees, on Friday, February 11. Committee Members were asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the proposed amendment. Mr. Clifton asked if there were any other requirements due to the project extending into the Urban Transportation Study Area, and also if there were any other available funding sources. Mr. Finch stated it must be included in the TIP, but no other requirements apply. He also noted that the portion of the roadway is eligible for MACI funding, but MACI funds can be spent upon any eligible project in the Urban Transportation Study Area. There was no further discussion.

MOTION: That the Technical Advisory Committee approve the addition to FFY 2009-2013 TIP Amendment #3 and recommend approval by PCC.

Made by: Mr. Helgeson  
Second: Mr. Clifton

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

### MACI Project Nominations – Member Updates

Ms. Weibel put forward two projects from MDT: 1) Bike Path from Warden Bridge to 6<sup>th</sup> St. SW, and 2) improvements at the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue North/Park Drive/6<sup>th</sup> St N. There followed some brief discussion on proposed improvements to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North (east of 57<sup>th</sup> Street), including the decision to forego the installation of sidewalks (due to sidewalk maintenance and roadway drainage concerns), and the intent to provide a bike path and a CTEP landscaping project along the roadway. Mr. Clifton stated the CTEP project had been approved by the State but initiating agreements were in progress.

Mr. Dobbs nominated two projects from the City: 1) Additional ADA ramps, and 2) A new phase of the Citywide Sidewalks project. Mr. Dobbs noted that the project funding amounts would be tied to the amount the City has for match. Mr. Turnbow stated that City Engineering is currently doing an inventory and identifying priority locations for ADA ramps.

Mr. Clifton noted that 52<sup>nd</sup> Street was still in need of paving, and he hoped that some solution could be found. Mr. Turnbow observed that subdivision development was intended to pay for some upgrades, but the economy has slowed development. He thought that the City might at some point contribute some funds to the improvements due to its ownership of the property east of the Street. Mr. Rearden also mentioned that the Baptist Church had at one point inquired about annexation but he had not heard anything of late.

Mr. Helgeson provided TAC members with a hand-out, putting forth the purchase of four buses as a MACI project. Mr. Helgeson said the Great Falls Transit District has relied upon earmarks and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) for bus purchases, but earmarks are likely not an option for at least the next two years. He said that \$1.4 million would purchase the buses, which were purchased in 1991 and are 9 years beyond their replacement date. The purchase would be split 80/20, Federal/Local Match, with the local match provided by the Transit District. Mr. Helgeson emphasized that the diesel engines have come a long way, with the addition of exhaust/particulate filters that reduce particulate matter emissions by more than 90%. The buses are built to last 12 years, and cost about \$350,000 each.

Mr. Rearden asked if the Great Falls Transit District was still receiving operating assistance from the MACI program. Mr. Helgeson said the District would not request additional years' assistance, and that the District's current priority is the purchase of buses. Mr. Helgeson also noted that the status of Federal Transportation funding is in question, with the expired bill going through continuing resolutions instead of reauthorization. He stated the current Administration is emphasizing high speed rail instead of transit funding for small urban areas.

In response to Mr. Finch's comment on the need to consider MDT's IDC (Indirect Cost) rate in a project cost, Mr. Helgeson noted that there is a bill currently making its way through the Montana legislature that would exempt all public transportation funds from MDT's IDC (overhead) charge.

Mr. Helgeson also asked if MACI and other Federal funds that are not obligated are at risk of being rescinded when the transportation act continuing resolutions end. Mr. Finch said that some of the applicability of rescissions is in the hands of MDT, but he would ask MDT how it may affect our local programs.

Mr. Rearden asked if cost estimates for the proposed MACI projects could be provided, to which the general response was affirmative. Mr. Finch said he would put together the project information others provided for consideration at the next TAC meeting.

## **OTHER BUSINESS & PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was brief discussion on the status of 9<sup>th</sup> Alley North immediately adjacent to the Northwest Bypass between 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW and 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW. Mr. Vosen indicated MDT was aware of some of the current issues along that segment. Jim Turnbow indicated a desire to discuss related issues with MDT at some point, and would follow up after the meeting.

There were no comments from the public.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 a.m.