

**MPO Semi-Annual Coordination Meeting  
Mahoney State Park  
June 18, 2014  
9AM-3:30PM**

**NDOR Director Greetings**

Performance measures are developing as we meet. Both the Highway Trust Fund and MAP-21 are in flux. The Senate is looking at the highway trust fund now; if they falter, reimbursement will slow or be prorated. MAP-21 was signed July 2012 and is expiring, as is the Trust Fund.

**FHWA Division Administrator Greetings**

Four Issues Face the Nation:

- 1) Highway Trust Fund Solvency. FHWA needs to maintain \$4 billion for day-to-day transactions.
- 2) MAP-21--several bill proposals being crafted to close financial gap in the trust fund.
- 3) FY 15 Appropriation Bill due October 1, 2014: House passed a bill last Tuesday with a similar level as FY 2014, \$43 billion. House cuts TIGER funding & transit funding. Obama opposes the House bill. Funds run out the end of August. If not resolved there are a handful of cash management strategies. Expect a 6 month extension of MAP-21 and 6 month extension of solvency.
- 4) Statewide Metropolitan Planning Rules June 6, 2014. Comments are encouraged including positive comments. In the review phase it is helpful to know what people like as a final rule is crafted.

Four Primary Changes in Proposed Rules

- 1) Performance Based
- 2) Emphasis on Statewide coordination with Non-Metropolitan areas (Regional Planning Organizations)
- 3) Public Transit Representative on Policy Board
- 4) Allow State Programmatic Mitigation

**FTA Planning Team Lead Greetings**

There are 155 pages of regulation. Page 30 pertains to TMA transit report on board. Please comment prior to September 2. FTA has a new electronic grant system, which will replace TEAM: TRAMS (Transit Asset Management System. TRAMS starts October 27<sup>th</sup>. Grand Island may want to wait until TRAMS starts, so they don't have to learn one then shift to another system.

TIGER Funds office of secretary is still reviewing no word on when it will be available.

Ladder of Opportunity Grants: Funds eligible for Bus Rehab and Facilities. Application due on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Selection criteria similar to TIGER. The difference is that there is no monetary threshold. You may get less than what you requested. Mike Brienzo asked if we receive less than requested may we reduce the scope? FTA said yes, you can scale down the program.

Certification & Reviews

Omaha: Went well

Lincoln: Last year  
Sioux City: This year  
Grand Island: Next fiscal year

### **FHWA Presentation**

FHWA presented material procurement and invoicing. See PowerPoint for details.

### **Roundtable Discussions**

MAPA reported that they tried something new today. The MPOs met prior to the general meeting for an open discussion. There were three major category topics: 1) NEPA project delivery; 2) Performance measures; and 3) CMAQ.

#### **1) NEPA**

What can we learn from other state's NEPA process? How do we Nebraskaize it? Concern that the MPOs are being left in the dark, that there needs to be more conversation between the state and MPOs. Details of scoping done by project engineers, MPO planners are not involved in the scoping.

This is a national problem not just a Nebraska problem. All the MPOs are structured differently with different challenges and limited resources. The FHWA is making a sizable investment to bring in a conflict resolution consultant. Want to deliver projects in compliance and as efficiently as possible. NDOR would like to be transparent, for people to know deadlines and be accountable for that and to hold us to deadlines. In return, the MPOs need to be accountable. MPOs should work with NDOR in developing a milestone skeleton: 1) is there enough time to fit into TIP, 2) establish a need. Go back to the criteria; if the project meets the criteria then it should be a good project. Proper scoping efforts up front pay off. This is important because NEPA is done early in the process. If there are changes to the scope we have to go back to square one and public involvement. Realize that, on average, NDOR is processing 40 local projects and roughly 150 statewide projects.

NDOR indicated the MPOs expedite the NEPA process by doing the following:

- have a strong project coordinator
- select consultants who have a good track record working through the NEPA process
- have staff meet monthly/quarterly to advance EAs
- set a realistic schedule and more comprehensive scopes

#### **2) MAP-21 Performance Measures**

What is the state's plan to consult with MPOs? When do we get started? How much manpower do we need? MPOs need strategic planning meetings and/or work sessions to discuss. What do you need from the MPOs & when do you need it? Lincoln pointed out every 5 years they ramp up for an LRTP update and we cannot update LRTPs twice in 5 years don't have the resources.

The FHWA can't have discussion until there is a final rule. Three months after the ruling comes down there will be a meeting to understand the rules. Once the final rule is made there are 24 months before performance measures need to be put in place. FHWA will be evaluating the

L RTP and TIP to see if they meet the criteria during the 2 year period. Likely there will be separate rulemakings to establish targets. It is likely that safety will be first measure to be final then subsequent measures will be released. FHWA will be light on oversight and heavy on stewardship (making progress toward compliance). Once there is guidance, webinars and workshops will be held.

NDOR is monitoring the new measures as they are released and will work closely with MPOs on developing their performance measures once the measures are final. The Rail and Public Transit Division Head will be coordinating this effort with NDOR in conjunction with the NDOR MPO Liaison.

### 3) CMAQ

MPOs would like NDOR to provide more detailed proposal guidelines and review process and also have interest in Nebraska doing a MPO set aside of funds like in Iowa.

NDOR CMAQ guidance and application process is designed to maximize opportunities the MPOs. Guidance on the application process for CMAQ funds can be found on the NDOR website. The guidance describes the criteria that should be in a proposal. In Nebraska we do not have nonattainment, so the funds can be used as STP. CMAQ funding awarded to project is not fiscal year specific.

### Midwest MPO Summit

MPOs come together to discuss best practices. Perhaps include public, private, state representatives. The last one was held in Iowa City in 2008. Funding is the major hurdle to having the conference, as well as how do you define the Midwest~ Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Wisconsin and Nebraska. Perhaps go to Trade Association for sponsorships.

### Speakers at the quarterly MPO coordination meetings

FHWA said that there is funding available for speakers. The MPOs suggested scheduling a speaker prior to the general meeting e.g. best practices in planning and programming, possibly someone from another MPO. FHWA is willing to bring someone in from the FHWA resource center.