

MEETING MINUTES

**Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
Long-Range Transportation Plan Steering Committee
3:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 28, 2018
Des Moines Area MPO Office
Burnham Conference Room
Des Moines, Iowa**

Members Present:

Gary Lorenz, City of Ankeny
Ruth Randleman, City of Carlisle, Chair
John Edwards, City of Clive
Chris Coleman, City of Des Moines
Frank Cownie, City of Des Moines
Matt Anderson, City of Des Moines
Stephanie Riva, City of Norwalk
Sara Kurovski, City of Pleasant Hill
Bob Andeweg, City of Urbandale
Angela Connolly, Polk County
Joshua V. Barr, Civil Rights, City of Des Moines
Elizabeth Presutti, DART
Andrew Woodard, GDMP
Rick Kozin, Public Health
Teree Caldwell-Johnson, Public School
Gretchen Tegeler, Tax Payers Association

Members Absent:

Kyle Mertz, City of Altoona
Tom Hadden, City of West Des Moines
Kent Sovern, AARP
Susan Judkins, WMA Council

Others Present:

Staff Present:

Todd Ashby, Director
Zach Young, Principal Planner
Gunnar Olson, Communications Manager
Andrew Collings, Senior Planner
Mike Armstrong, Senior Planner
Marcus Coenen, Senior Planner
Allison Riley, Associate Planner

1. Call to Order

Chair Ruth Randleman called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Subcommittee members voted to approve the meeting agenda.

3. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee members voted to approve the February 28, 2018, meeting minutes.

4. Trends in Transportation Planning

Staff continued the discussion regarding trends in transportation from the February 28, 2018, meeting. Staff noted that at this meeting they would cover the two remaining topics – congestion/capacity and expansion vs. maintenance.

Staff provided some background information on congestion and capacity. The background information included a discussion on induced demand and how expanding roadways leads to more traffic. It also included some discussion on how the classification of roads pushes traffic to collectors and arterials rather than spreading traffic throughout the network.

Staff noted that the purpose of the discussion guide was to determine what level of importance to place on congestion when making project selection decision as part of the plan update.

Sara Kurovski asked if congestion could be defined. Staff noted that one of the challenging things about congestion is people have different levels of congestion they feel are tolerable. Staff noted that the technical definition from the Congestion Management Process is based on reliability of the system – can commuters get from point A to point B in a consistent and reliable amount to time.

Elizabeth Presutti noted that congestion isn't necessarily a bad thing. Ms. Presutti stated that congestion makes people think about the transportation system and evaluate other modes of transportation. Ms. Presutti also noted that the duration of the congestion should be considered and questioned if we should be spending millions of dollars to address a problem with limited duration.

Stephanie Riva stated that she would like to see alternatives to addressing congestion that don't go straight to roadway expansion. Ms. Riva noted several alternatives included HOV lanes and increasing public transit options.

Staff asked if, as part of the LRTP update, member governments should have to show that they have looked at less expensive alternatives to address traffic issues before submitting the large expansion projects.

Discussion ensued regarding how to approach congestion in the LRTP update. The general consensus of the committee was that it makes sense to have member governments think more about alternatives to expansion when submitting projects for the LRTP update.

Staff provided some background information on expansion vs. maintenance. Staff noted that in the last LRTP update there was a shift towards focusing more on maintenance and asked the committee if this is a direction that the current update should continue to pursue.

Chris Coleman suggested that perhaps there should be some standard that communities must meet to qualify for spending federal dollars on a maintenance project.

Discussion ensued regarding how maintenance should be defined and addressed in the LRTP update.

The committee agreed that maintenance is an important issue that needs to have an emphasis in the plan and should be discussed further at future meetings.

5. Scenario Planning

Staff provided an overview of scenario planning and asked if the committee thought it would be useful to go through some scenario planning exercises at upcoming committee meetings. The committee agreed this could be a useful exercise to go through.

6. Future Meeting Schedule

Staff discussed the future meeting schedule. The committee agree future meeting should be on a monthly rather than bi-monthly basis.

7. Other Non-Action Items of Interest

None.

8. Next Meeting Date

May 23, 2018, at 3:30 p.m.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.