

AGENDA

Special Executive Board Meeting

4:00 PM to 5:00 PM

March 29, 2021

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/79199115652>

Meeting ID: 791 9911 5652

Dial-in: +1 408 638 0968US

Regular meetings and work sessions are open to the public. Persons with a disability may request a reasonable accommodation by contacting MetroPlan via email at rosie.wear@metroplanflg.org. The MetroPlan complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to involve and assist underrepresented and underserved populations (age, gender, color, income status, race, national origin and LEP – Limited English Proficiency.) Requests should be made by contacting the MetroPlan at 928-266-1293 as early as possible to allow time to arrange the accommodation. ***A quorum of the TAC may be present.***

Public Questions and Comments must be emailed to rosie.wear@metroplanflg.org prior to the meeting.

NOTICE OF OPTION TO RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.02, notice is hereby given to the members of the MetroPlan Executive Board and to the general public that, at this regular meeting, the MetroPlan Executive Board may vote to go into executive session, which will not be open to the public, for legal advice and discussion with the MetroPlan Executive Board's attorneys for legal advice on any item listed on the following agenda, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03(A).

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

- ☐ Jim McCarthy, Flagstaff City Council, Interim Chair
- ☐ Patrice Horstman, Coconino County Board of Supervisors, Vice-Chair
- ☐ Jeronimo Vasquez, Coconino County Board of Supervisors
- ☐ Austin Aslan, Flagstaff City Council
- ☐ Steve Peru, Mountain Line Board of Directors
- ☐ Regina Salas, Flagstaff City Council
- ☐ Jesse Thompson, Arizona State Transportation Board Member
- ☐ Judy Begay, Coconino County Board of Supervisors (alternate)
- ☐ Becky Daggett, Flagstaff City Council (alternate)

METROPLAN STAFF

- ☐ Jeff Meilbeck, Executive Director
- ☐ David Wessel, Manager
- ☐ Rosie Wear, Business Manager

I. PRELIMINARY GENERAL BUSINESS

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

(At this time, any member of the public may address the Board on any subject within their jurisdiction that is not scheduled before the Board on that day. Due to Open Meeting Laws, the Board cannot discuss or act on items presented during this portion of the agenda. To address the Board on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.)

II. CONSENT AGENDA

(Items on the consent agenda are routine in nature and/or have already been budgeted or discussed by the Executive Board.)

III. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Surface Transportation Project Authorization – Lone Tree Corridor

MetroPlan Staff: Jeff Meilbeck

Recommendation: Staff recommends the Executive Board adopt a resolution requesting an Authorization of \$46.9 Million for the Lone Tree Corridor in the pending surface transportation bill.

IV: CLOSING BUSINESS

A. ITEMS FROM THE BOARD

(Board members may make general announcements, raise items of concern or report on current topics of interest to the Board. Items are not on the agenda, so discussion is limited and action not allowed.)

B. ADJOURN

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at www.metroplanflg.org on March 26, 2021 at 3:45 pm..

Dated this 26th Day of March 2021.

Rosie Wear

Rosie Wear, Business Manager



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6 E Aspen Avenue, Suite 200
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
928-266-1293
www.metroplanflg.org

STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: March 26, 2021
MEETING DATE: March 29, 2021
TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Jeff Meilbeck, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Surface Transportation Project Authorization – Lone Tree Corridor

1. Recommendation:

i Staff recommends the Executive Board adopt a resolution requesting an Authorization of \$46.9 Million for the Lone Tree Corridor in the pending surface transportation bill.

2. Related Strategic Workplan Item

i Secure at least \$2.1 Million in resources over the next 5 years in a manner that directly benefits member agencies (at least \$750,000 by June 30, 2021)

3. Background

i The “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act” (FAST-Act) expires on September 30, 2021 and Congressional efforts are underway on reauthorization. It is anticipated that reauthorization will be a multi-year bill up to \$4 Trillion, a heretofore unprecedented amount. To put this number into context, the FAST Act was authorized at \$305 Billion.

Over the past few weeks, MetroPlan has communicated with staff at the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, NAU and Mountain Line regarding priorities for the pursuit of federal funding. The Lone Tree Corridor is seen as an excellent project for a number of reasons:



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1. *The project was approved by voters in 2018 and has definitive community support.*
2. *The approval of proposition 419 by Flagstaff voters provides local match to draw down federal funds.*
3. *The project is large enough that federalizing it, i.e., incurring additional costs related to environmental, design and regulatory considerations, will still result in a financial advantage for the City of Flagstaff and local taxpayers.*
4. *The project benefits all MetroPlan member agencies including ADOT, the City, the County, Mountain Line and NAU. Further, the project has benefits for the Community College.*
5. *Federal funding can be used to hire additional staff to meet project management and grant management requirements.*
6. *The local timeline for construction of the Lone Tree Corridor is compatible with the federal timeline for funding. For example, if an appropriation is received in FY 22 or FY 23, the City will have until FY 25 or FY 26 to obligate the funds to the project. Obligation means that the funds are committed to the project, not that construction is 100% completed. FY 26 is 8 years after approval of Proposition 419 and within the City's timeframe for obligation, if not construction.*

The approach to receiving federal funding is to enter the process now and follow it through to completion. There are a number of steps in the process that need to be taken in turn. For example, the first goal is to obtain a \$46.9 Million authorization for the project in the new surface transportation bill. While the authorization does not provide funding, it does identify and legitimize the project and is a first step in receiving an appropriation later. Actual funding would come through a grant or an appropriations bill, and the pursuit of appropriations would be an ongoing effort.

An application is required for the Lone Tree Corridor to be considered for an authorization in the new surface transportation bill. In addition to basic project information, the Committee will require all submissions to include the following information for each project requested:



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- *Documentation that the project is on the State, Tribal, or territorial transportation improvement program (STIP); and on the metropolitan transportation improvement program (TIP), if applicable*
- *Sources of funding for the full share of the cost of the project beyond the amount requested*
- *Letter(s) of support from the State department of transportation, or local government, transit agency or other non-Federal sponsor*
- *A description of the process that has been or will be followed to provide an opportunity for public comment on the project*
- *Project phase (e.g., Planning, Final Design, Construction)*
- *NEPA category of action (e.g., Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Statement)*
- *Status of environmental review*
- *Whether the project has received Federal funding previously, and if so, the source and amount.*
- *Certification that the Member, their spouse, and other immediate family members do not have a financial interest in the project.*

A grant prospect worksheet is attached to this staff report. Details on this worksheet can be discussed, modified as needed and confirmed with the Management Committee so that MetroPlan can move forward in alignment with our member agencies and with confidence in our approach.

4. TAC and Management Committee Discussion

i *The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) voted to approve this request on March 24, 2021 and the Management Committee provided consensus support for this project on March 25, 2021*



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5. Fiscal Impact

- i** *The \$46.9 Million federal includes a 40% increase in costs to meet federal requirements. This means the original project cost was \$33.5 Million. The cost to the City would be up to 20% of total project costs or \$9.38 Million. As such, the net impact on the City of Flagstaff is that local costs may decrease from \$33.5 Million to \$9.38 Million, a \$24.12 Million savings in local funding.*

6. Alternatives

- i**
 - 1. Pursue Lone Tree Corridor authorization in the amount of \$46.9 Million. Recommended. This alternative is recommended because it is a viable project that meets the needs of the community and stands to save up to \$24.12 Million of local taxpayer funding.*
 - 2. Identify another project for MetroPlan to pursue. There may be other projects that are higher priority or more competitive for funding. However, the Lone Tree Corridor is a natural because it is a priority for all member agencies and is large enough to provide a significant financial gain for the region. Local funds freed up by the federal grant can be used to fund other local projects.*
 - 3. Identify many projects for MetroPlan to pursue. (Not recommended). This alternative would increase the number of projects, but risks decreasing the chances of funding any of them.*
 - 4. Don't pursue any projects. (Not recommended). This alternative would keep all projects locally funded and might simplify project management and reduce overall costs of project completion. However, federal funds can be used to hire staff needed to complete increased project requirements and the net cost to local taxpayers decreases with federal funding even if the overall cost of the project increases.*

7. Attachments

- i**
 - 1) Resolution 2021-01*
 - 2) Project Designation Instructions*



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Resolution Number 2021-01

A Resolution of the Flagstaff Metropolitan Planning Organization (Greater Flagstaff MetroPlan) Executive Board Urging our Congressional Delegation to Take Action to Include a \$46.9 Million Authorization for the Lone Tree Corridor in the Surface Transportation Bill.

WHEREAS, the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act” (FAST-Act) expires on September 30, 2021 and Congressional efforts are underway on reauthorization, and

WHEREAS, the \$46.9 Million Lone Tree corridor establishes important north-south arterial connectivity from E Route 66 to JW Powell and through the Interstate 40 corridor, and

WHEREAS, the Lone Tree corridor will connect to the City of Flagstaff’s \$72.4 Million locally funded railroad overpass investment, and

WHEREAS, 20% local match funding for the Lone Tree corridor was approved by Flagstaff voters in 2018 as Proposition 419 and the City of Flagstaff has a dedicated 21 year funding stream with local match appropriation over \$9.38 in FY 2026, and

WHEREAS, letters of support for the Lone Tree Corridor from the City of Flagstaff, Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (Mountain Line), Northern Arizona University, Coconino County, Greater Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, Arizona Department of Transportation, Coconino Community College, Flagstaff Unified School District and others have either been received or are forthcoming, and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive planning process has been and will continue to be followed, and

WHEREAS, the project is in the 15% design stage and design work will continue, and

WHEREAS, preliminary environmental review of the Lone Tree Corridor indicates that it will be eligible for a Categorical Exclusion among much of its length and require an Environmental Assessment for the remainder, and

WHEREAS, the Lone Tree Corridor has not previously received Federal funding,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Board of the Greater Flagstaff MetroPlan hereby urges our Arizona Congressional Delegation to:

Include a \$46.9 Million Authorization for the Lone Tree Corridor in the Surface Transportation Bill.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 29th day of March 2021.

Jim McCarthy
Executive Board Chair, Greater Flagstaff MetroPlan
Flagstaff City Council

ATTEST:

Jeff Meilbeck
Executive Director, Greater Flagstaff MetroPlan

To: Jeff Meilbeck
Subject: Highway and Transit Member Project Designations

Highway and Transit Member Project Designations

Sending Office: Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
Sent By: Zan.Guendert@mail.house.gov

March 3, 2021

Dear Colleague:

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will advance surface transportation authorization legislation later this spring, building on H.R. 2, the “Moving Forward Act,” from the 116th Congress. This letter outlines several opportunities for additional Member engagement in the development of this important legislation.

Policy Priorities

The Committee invites Member feedback on H.R. 2 as we continue the reauthorization process. Member recommendations and related surface transportation policy priorities must be submitted via letter to the Committee and must be received via email to T&IMemberPriorities@mail.house.gov no later than April 14, 2021. To facilitate review, the Committee encourages Member feedback to focus on direct modifications or additions to the programs and policies set forth in H.R. 2.

Member Day Hearing

The Committee will hold a Member Day hearing again this Congress. This hearing will be held on **April 14 at 11 a.m.** to receive testimony from Members not on the Committee on H.R. 2 and related policy priorities, as well as project requests. Additional information on how to participate in Member Day will be laid out in a future communication from the Committee.

Project Requests

The Committee also intends to provide an opportunity for Members to submit requests for highway and transit project designations. The formal process to submit project requests, including detailed information on how to submit projects and the documentation required, will be announced later this month. However, to provide Member offices as much time as possible to vet potential projects, we are releasing key information in advance of a formal rollout. The Committee strongly encourages Members to begin gathering this information now, as we anticipate the window to submit project requests will be relatively short.

In addition to basic project information, the Committee will require all submissions to include the following information for each project requested:

- Documentation that the project is on the State, Tribal, or territorial transportation improvement program (STIP); and on the metropolitan transportation improvement program (TIP), if applicable
- Sources of funding for the full share of the cost of the project beyond the amount requested
- Letter(s) of support from the State department of transportation, or local government, transit agency, or other non-Federal sponsor
- A description of the process that has been or will be followed to provide an opportunity for public comment on the project
- Project phase (e.g. Planning, Final Design, Construction)
- NEPA category of action (e.g. Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Statement)
- Status of environmental review
- Whether the project has received Federal funding previously, and if so, the source and amount
- Certification that the Member, their spouse, and other immediate family members do not have a financial interest in the project

The Committee strongly encourages Member offices to engage with your State department of transportation, regional transportation and metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, and other local transportation agencies to get an understanding of eligible projects, and the priorities of the transportation agencies in your districts and State, based on the above parameters.

The Committee further encourages Member offices to consider projects that will help advance the goals of the surface transportation authorization legislation, which include building a safer transportation network, increasing access, strengthening our multi-modal transportation systems, reducing carbon pollution, enhancing environmental justice, supporting underserved communities, and improving state of good repair of our Nation's infrastructure.

We are certain you will have questions as you start to formulate your policy and project priorities. In addition to detailed written instructions and guidelines the Committee will release later this month, we also

intend to hold a least one virtual briefing and Q&A session to facilitate this process. In the meantime, please direct any questions to Committee staff by emailing T&IMemberProjectInquiries@mail.house.gov.

We look forward to your partnership in advancing a surface transportation bill that invests in America, breaks ground on critical projects in our communities, and transforms the way we build and move.

Sincerely,

CHAIRMAN PETER A. DEFazio

CHAIRWOMAN ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

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