



625 Texas Street, Suite 200 | Shreveport, LA 71101  
318.841.5950 | F 318.841.5952 | www.nlcog.org

## **Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Policy Committee**

### **MINUTES**

**Friday, July 19, 2024 (9:00 AM)**  
**625 Texas Street, Seminar Room**  
Shreveport, LA 71101

#### **Members Present**

Mr. Alan Clarke – MPC City of Shreveport  
Mr. Butch Ford – Bossier Parish  
Mayor Tom Arceneaux – City of Shreveport  
Mr. Bruce Blanton – Webster Parish  
Mr. Eric England – Port of Caddo-Bossier  
Ms. Erica Bryant – Caddo Parish  
Mr. Dinero' Washington – SporTran  
Mrs. Carlotta Askew-Brown – MPC City of Bossier City  
Mr. Michael Norton – DeSoto Parish

#### **Members Absent**

Mayor Tommy Chandler – City of Bossier City  
Mr. David North – LaDOTD District 04 – Mr. Phillip Sturdivant sitting in, but in a non-voting capacity.

#### **Others Present**

Mr. Kent Rogers – NLCOG  
Mr. Chris Petro – NLCOG  
Ms. Savannah Williams – NLCOG  
Ms. Heidi Stewart - NLCOG  
Mr. Adam Driskill - NLCOG  
Ms. Rita Arnold – NLCOG  
Dr. Shelly Barrett - NLCOG  
Mr. Josh Chevallier – NLCOG Legal Council

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Ford called the meeting to order. He stated that we generally have an invocation, roll call and a pledge at the beginning of the meeting. Mr. Ford said that he was going to ask Mr. Washington to lead us in prayer and Mrs. Askew-Brown to lead us in the pledge. He asked if those that cared to join them to please stand. Mr. Washington began the invocation followed by Mrs. Askew-Brown leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Ford asked Mr. Rogers to begin a roll call. Mr. Rogers began the roll call. A quorum was present.

## Public Comments

Mr. Ford asked Mr. Rogers if they had received any public comments. Mr. Rogers stated they had received one comment.

**Mr. Perkins** was the only comment. He stated he was from Allendale Strong, and they were disappointed to have missed the meeting last month. Mr. Perkins said he was excited to learn that their Mayor, Mr. Arceneaux, had traveled to Philadelphia where they had been fighting a fight like this for many years over I-676. They finally reached a compromise with the people that wanted it removed, capped and buried. They expect that they'll see great financial benefits to the surrounding neighborhoods after they get that accomplished. Mr. Perkins said that they were also excited that their mayor had taken up a study with Bloomberg (Center for Cities) at Harvard University. Bloomberg was one of the first national press organizations to reach out to them to ask some good questions and give them some good advice. Mr. Perkins said they've been very helpful and very supportive. They look forward to following the story with them as it continues to progress.

**Mayor Arceneaux wanted to make it clear that neither one of those trips had anything to do with I-49. Any attempt to try and subvert his position as a result of that, he just wants to make that clear.**

## Business

### 1. Approval of Minutes

The next item on the agenda was for approval of the minutes of the June 28, 2024, meeting. Mr. Clarke motioned, and Mr. Norton seconded to approve the minutes as provided. Mr. Ford called for questions or comments. Having none, the chair called for a vote and the motion passed.

### 2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

#### A. TIP Amendments and Modifications

Mr. Rogers stated the first was an introduction for public comment of Transit Amendment 5339c and 5339b programs. The "c" program is the low-no emissions vehicle program for SporTran to get around twenty-five new buses. The 5339 "b" program is the rural bus and bus facilities. Mr. Rogers said that these are for introduction only and will be up for adoption at the next meeting.

Mr. Rogers stated the second one they had was the 5307 Transit Program. It was introduced at the last meeting, and just as a reminder, it was to bring the line items in line with what the actual final allocation of funding was through FTA. Mr. Rogers said they haven't received any public comment on that. In terms of the actual TIP and what needs to be voted on and approved, those are the items.

Mr. Ford asked if there were any further questions. Having none, Mr. Ford entertained a motion for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Approval of the Amendments for Introduction for Public Comment and the Approval of the Amendment for Adoption. Mr. Washington motioned, and Mr. Norton seconded. Mr. Ford called for questions or comments. Having none, the chair called for a vote and the motion passed.

## **B. STBG > 200K Program Update**

Mr. Rogers stated that the next item on the agenda was a list of the projects listed in the MTP that utilized the STBG 200K attributable funds that come to this area and where those projects stand that were outlined over the next few years. This is just to give them an idea of where they're at and where they're standing. The first one is the Bossier Parish Congestion Relief Winfield Road Phase I. One of them had some comments along with the I-69 project that will be discussed later in terms of contracting. Mr. Rogers said that he knows that Mr. Ford has been dealing with similar things in dealing with the contractors.

Mr. Ford wanted to note that DOTD originally put out an RFP (Record for Proposal) for this project and it was one point six three million. This has been a five-year process for them. Mr. Ford said that when they called him earlier this spring and said the cost was going to be two point nine million for eighty percent claims, they asked for a break down and it was evident that there were issues with it. Finally, about a month ago, the chief engineer asked them to negotiate the contract. Mr. Ford said that now they are negotiating the contract, and it looks like they'll get it down to one point seven or close to that. It's been a big fight, but hopefully in about thirty days they'll be started on this project. It has definitely been one issue after another for the last five years.

Mr. Rogers said the next project on the list was the Inner Loop Extension that was a placeholder in terms of funding to do some initial mapping work to go along with the FONSI.

The next two projects are associated with the I-69 Frontage Road Project. The two sections that they are utilizing the Urban Area funding for. There is a third section that goes along with this, but the funding for that third section is strictly state/ federal from old earmark monies from the project.

The next projects on the list were the two on Linwood Avenue. Mr. Rogers said that Phase III has letting scheduled for August 14, 2024, so that should be going out soon. Linwood Phase IV, when the estimates for that project came in around the fourteen-million-dollar range, they sat down with the city and looked at converting that from a total reconstruction project to a panel replacement project. Since some of the roadways in that project had already been fixed and updated due to some of the water and sewer projects, just the joint and panel repair is what will be done through that corridor. The project is to be rescoped due to the preliminary estimate of eleven million.

Mr. Rogers said the next two are from the Pavement Preservation Program. One is a series of asphalt projects, and one is a series of panel replacement programs. The engineering for those went out the last couple of months and the construction is said to go out in the very near future also.

For Webster Parish, one project update is for 371. Local Share has included this in the Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Outlay funds. One thing Mr. Rogers would like to point out that he noticed on the bond issue was that there were quite a few priority five projects listed there. One thought he had for them is for Webster Parish, Mr. Bruce Blanton, to possibly meet with the Bond Commission and see since they are putting out some of the fives, getting with DOTD and seeing if they could get just a portion of that moved up and underway. Second is a series of safety improvements. He believes they were for intersection permits, some signage and re-stripping of different areas.

Mr. Rogers stated for the next two, one is for their plan update, which they will begin to put the scoping, the Plan's scope, together with the department and it's anticipated to be completed the first quarter of fiscal year

2025. For the Active Transportation Plan, ATG will be here at the next meeting to give them a status report of where they are for the ATP and the SS4A Safe Streets Program.

The next few have to do with the enhancement funds that come to the area. The BOOM or BUST Scenic Viewing area is in the Oil City area. The original applications were made by the tourist bureau. The final one is the Motorist Assistance Patrol (M.A.P.) program and whom we allocate funds to.

Mr. Petro said it's contractual for five years and they just renegotiated it. They will be coming to the board within the next meeting or two to amend the amount that's shown in the TIP. The MPO is obligated by a contractual agreement with LaDOTD for fifty percent of the contractual cost of M.A.P. services. They just renegotiated a contract with a new vendor and the cost has increased a little bit, as you can imagine, but they'll be utilizing their Carbon Reduction Funding for that, which is nice. Mr. Petro said that it will leave their STBG funding that they get annually alone, and since this is an eligible cost under the Carbon Reduction Program, they'll be able to utilize it there.

Mr. Ford stated that if any of them had any Priority five money, it would behoove them to make a trip down there to meet with their legislature to see if they can get some help to get projects started.

## **Project Update**

### **1. I-20 Rehab**

Mrs. Buchanan, Public Information Officer from LaDOTD, came to give updates for the I-20 Rehab and Jimmie Davis Bridge projects. Mrs. Buchanan stated that many of them probably saw that they announced the pouring of the new sections for the travel lane, which is a pretty significant milestone both for the project and historically. This is the first time this has happened in almost sixty years for that section of interstate. That particular activity is continuing. Mrs. Buchanan said the reconstruction on the Old Minden Road interchange is continuing and they hope to have that open in mid-August weather permitting. Once that interchange is open it'll be the first time, you'll be able to drive physically on the new concrete of the project once those ramps are reopened. They recently opened Old Minden Road. There were some utility relocation issues that had to occur right there at I-20, but that's back open now. Mrs. Buchanan stated that they are also continuing the nighttime full depth concrete panel repair on the Shreveport side of the project. That occurs most nights between Monkhouse and Pines Road. The CMV prohibition remains in place. Their law enforcement partners have given out about thirty-five hundred citations so far. They're still in communication with various GPS services and companies, including Drivewise, that say they're actually piloting a system for I-20 to put a notification to about thirty percent of the CMV drivers that use that app to utilize the I-220 detour. All those things are occurring simultaneously for the project and asked if anyone had any questions.

Mr. Ford asked if they were on schedule.

Mrs. Buchanan said, yes, they were about a third complete right now and remain on schedule. There's been some rain, but they are still on schedule at this time.

Mr. Rogers asked what interchange will be next for this course.

Mrs. Buchanan stated that they haven't determined that yet. It will probably be Airline or Industrial. They have their weekly progress meeting today at noon, whether or not they'll know anything then, but it's discussed every week. They will let everyone know as soon as they know.

## **2. Jimmie Davis Bridge**

Mrs. Buchanan stated that they just put out an announcement, a week ago today, for everyone to expect from this time forward, intermittent lane closures on each side of the bridge, 511. US 71 will experience some as well, and of course the cranes are in place on either parkway, so those short lane closures are there as well and have been for the last couple of months or two. The contractor is going to begin working on their temporary trussell bridge which they'll use to construct their new bridge over the water. When you see some activity taking place, it's not on the new bridge, it's for the temporary bridge to build the new bridge. It's moving forward for right now. Mrs. Buchanan asked if anyone had any questions.

Mrs. Askew-Brown asked if there had been any updates on the possibility or not of the linear park.

Mrs. Buchanan said that there were still discussions about the future of the existing bridge. She doesn't think a decision has been made of exactly where that stands in whether a linear park is going to happen, if that's something that the community really wants and is best for the community or whether the existing bridge should see a different future. That's kind of where that stands right now. Whether they can save money by not doing the linear park.

A gentleman from the public asked if the project was still on schedule.

Mrs. Buchanan said that it was. All of this is preliminary work, but it's still on schedule as far as the overall completion of the four-lane structure is expected, which would be early 2027.

## **3. I-69 Frontage Road Connector**

Mr. Rogers stated that the last item on the project updates was the I-69 Frontage Road Connector. As they referred to earlier, the selection for engineering consultants' advertisement was published August 30th of last year and there is still no contract. It's some of the similar issues that Bossier Parish was going through with their East/West roadway. Mr. Rogers said that it could be what Mr. Ford said and they may need some type of group trip to try to encourage quicker development of those contracts and with the association of those contracts. Maybe reworking how some of those contracts are negotiated so they can move forward in a quicker fashion. Mr. Rogers asked Mr. Comeaux if he had anything to add.

Mr. Comeaux said that if not weekly then bi-weekly that he's been checking in. He was told on several occasions, he would say several months ago, that it would be in what they call CCS, Consulting Contract Services Division, to have the contract developed. Mr. Comeaux said that he was told on Wednesday that it would be there tomorrow, Thursday. He checked this morning, Friday, and it's still not there. It's extremely frustrating and he understands what Mr. Ford is saying about if they could figure out a way to expedite things because contracts shouldn't be this difficult. Mr. Comeaux stated that he did understand that it was going to be a seven-million-dollar design fee. Design and survey are all inclusive of the ten-mile stretch. It's quite an expansive design, but it shouldn't be terribly difficult. Each segment is about a third each which makes up the ten miles.

## Announcements

Mr. Ford wanted to make a quick announcement. He said he had just gotten back from Tampa, and he had never briefed the MPO about this, but he just wanted to tell them what he's been doing the last couple of years. Mr. Ford said that he spoke with the justice and public safety committee at the NACo, National Association of Counties, convention and this was his second year. If they recalled, back in 2016, they had a thousand-year flood event that went right through the middle of Bossier. In South Bossier, the water couldn't get out into the river and was over the roads for a foot to three feet for up to three weeks. Being a road designer, Civil Engineer, he knows that water damages roads. Mr. Ford said to make a long story short, they made a request. They had fifty-two roads that were inundated at that time. They noticed the damage and were told the policy had changed; they couldn't help them. They appealed and had to go to arbitration right before Covid hit. They went up to Washington, D.C. with their team and subsequently in March of 2021 they won. They received thirty-two million dollars from FEMA. He worked on that at home during Covid for one week. He's glad to say today that they've completed reconstruction of all those roads. Mr. Ford said that in June of 2020, FEMA wrote in their PAPPG, their policy manual, that road inundations are no longer eligible for public assistance. Can you imagine that? They know his name for sure. He thinks they were the first and only to win an arbitration of this magnitude. This was after Katrina. Eight parishes around Katrina received at one point eight billion dollars for inundation damage. Then FEMA goes up to New York after Sandy and writes a check for five hundred million to the state or surrounding counties that received those funds. Mr. Ford said they're trying to get the language changed in the PAPPG. It just so happens that their doing a new version, version five, and if you go to FEMA PAPPG Version 5, there's a comment in the timeframe and they're in the middle of it up thru August, go to page eighty-six and there's one little sentence in one little paragraph that takes it out. It's a travesty to all these counties and parishes throughout the country with all these rain events that we're having that roads are getting in a day. We're talking about the oceans rising and these kinds of issues are more prevalent now than they've ever been and now they're going to try to keep from paying us. If you get a chance to go look at it, look at it. If you want to make a comment, make a comment. We are Bossier Parish and we're doing everything we can to get this language removed so when we have another flood in the future, maybe we can apply for those funds.

Mr. Rogers wanted to let them know again that Alliance Transportation Group will be present at the next meeting to give an update on the Active Transportation Plan and the SS4A. The next meeting is Friday, August 16, 2024, at 9:00 AM.

## Adjourn

With no remaining agenda items, Mr. Ford entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Blanton motioned, and Mr. Clarke seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.



---

J. Kent Rogers, Secretary

# PUBLIC COMMENT CARD

All cards must be returned to the Chair prior to the start of the meeting. Comments will not be accepted during the meeting. You will be called upon at the appropriate time to speak.

As a reminder, public comment is limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.

Comments relative to any issues that are in active litigation will not be heard in this meeting.

Speakers are to address the Chairman, not each other or the audience, and are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. The use of abusive or profane language shall not be allowed. No debate or argument between speakers and/or members of the audience shall be permitted.

Please print:

Date: 7-19-24

Name: John Perkins

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

I am representing:  myself  business  organization

Name of business / organization: Allendale Strong

## Comment on Agenda Items Only

Briefly describe your comment(s):

Brief remarks

missed last meeting

Area - to Thilly

excited Bloomberg study

major → north trip is relative to I-49