

# Flagstaff Transit Spine Study

## Technical Advisory Committee - Meeting #4

**Date:** February 18, 2016  
**Time:** 10 am – 11:30 pm  
**Location:** NAIPTA Training Facility  
3773 N. Kaspar Dr., Flagstaff, AZ 86004

### Attendees:

- Sara Allred (phone), ADOT
- Lauren Battice, NAIPTA
- Alicia Becker, NAIPTA
- Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn
- Heather Damolin, NAIPTA
- Jim Dickey, NAIPTA
- Agnes Drogi, NAU
- Anne Dunno, NAIPTA
- Randy Farwell, Nelson Nygaard
- Monica Gress, NAIPTA
- Theresa Gunn, GCI
- Martin Ince, FMPO
- Jacki Lenner, NAIPTA
- Erika Mazza, NAIPTA
- Stuart McDaniel, Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce
- Jeff Meilbeck, NAIPTA
- Jennifer Mikelson, City of Flagstaff
- Dylan Monke, NAIPTA
- Kevin Parkes, City of Flagstaff
- Zach Schwartz, Coconino County
- Cready Smith, ADOT Region Traffic
- Erin Stam (phone), NAU
- Jim Wagner, NAIPTA
- David Wessel, FMPO

### Welcome and Introductions

Erika Mazza, NAIPTA, welcomed the TAC members and asked everyone to introduce themselves. She reviewed the agenda and informed members there were definitions of the terms being used today on the back of the agenda.

### Study Overview

Erika Mazza presented the current project timeline and reminded TAC members of their role - providing technical support in the decision process. She stated the objectives of the meeting are to:

- Confirm initial and proposed locally preferred alternative
- Confirm BNSF Milton/Route 66 Improvements
- Confirm transit connection center strategy
- Provide guidance and outreach

### Draft Locally Preferred Alternative

Erika reminded the TAC that the team started with 8 initial alternative and 3 airport segments which were screened and discussed at the Sept. 2015 TAC meeting. Information provided by the TAC was used to develop a refined alternative. After additional analysis the initial alternatives were further refined and the team considered options for the BNSF crossing and a multi-modal hub.

The team has developed a proposed locally preferred alternative. See attached presentation for a map of the proposed alternative. Highlights of the alignment included the following.

- The alignment uses the proposed new Beulah extension. Project team has met with the P3 developer to discuss possibilities for BRT on the property.

- Route returns to Milton at University. The team is considering options for improving travel time on Milton.
- Preference is to go north on Humphrys and south on Beaver.
- An option still under consideration is to use Cedar or divert on Gemini to serve the Mesa neighborhood. This option is constrained by a right in and right out intersection.
- Stations locations are proposed approximately every ½ mile.

**Airport to Beulah/Woodland Village:**

- Proposed 6 stations:
  - Airport Station
  - JWP Station
  - Pulliam & High Country Trail
  - High Country Trail & Cattle Drive
  - High Country Trail & Lake Mary
  - Lake Mary & Beulah
- Buses to operate in mixed traffic with Transit Signal Priority (TSP) & Queue Jump (QJ) where needed.

***TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments***

- Q: What is the purpose of JWP Station? A: For future growth and potential office development in the area.
- C: Consider a station at High Country closer to Sandstone Highlands. Potential for senior ridership in this area.
- Airport segment may not be a big trip generator and need to be considered frequency.
- C: The airport would like to have the service to help attract new development and future plans.
- C: Possible future consideration—convert the FUTS trail at I-40 to a multi-modal use instead of crossing Beulah
- Q: Can you take the bus around the south side of the airport to provide service to the existing large facilities? A: Meeting with the city of Flagstaff this afternoon to review and discuss traffic and roadway improvements and will discuss options at the airport.

**Woodlands Village to Downtown Segment**

- Uses the Beulah and University extensions
- Bus/bike shared right turn lanes where feasible
- TSP/QJ where needed
- Possible Stations:
  - Mobility hubs at McConnell/Beulah and Butler/Milton
  - University
  - Plaza Way
  - Improved pedestrian connection from stations to NAU at University and Plaza Way

**TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- Q: What is safety experience of a shared bus/bike lane? A: Boulder has not had problems but have a different bicycle culture in the community. Bicyclists tend to only be in the lane a short distance.
- C: Improves corridor for cars by adding additional right turn lanes
- C: Lot of the P3 development will be pedestrian intensive. May want to have a stop at the southern portion of the development area.
- A: Stop between Woodlands Village and P3 development might present an opportunity for a grade separated pedestrian area.

**Downtown to Gemini Drive Segment**

- Includes the following elements:
  - BNSF Bridge reconstruction
  - Widen Milton Route 66
  - Single lane busway
  - Bike lanes
  - Busway connection at Basha's Shopping Center
    - May require additional right of way and could present a grade issue. Could have a bus lane in the parking lot apron on the southeast corner.
  - New intersection at Pine Cliff
  - Forest or Gemini option
  - TSP/QJ where needed
- Potential Stations:
  - Mobility hubs at Butler, Birch/Cherry, and Station
  - Hunt Avenue - north and southbound - possible use of alleyway as pedestrian facility
  - Forrest/Pine Cliff or Gemini

**TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- Q: Are hubs a replacement of the Downtown Connection Center in addition? A: Looking at less of a pulse system and more places for transfer at mobility hubs. Still looking at DCC options.
- C: Crossing from Route 2 from San Francisco over to Humphreys is difficult.
- Q: Will all service be pulled off San Francisco? A: Currently working to move routes 2/5 alignment to Beaver instead of San Francisco. Change will probably be made before any new BRT service.
- C: Humphreys was chosen partially to serve future development plans.
- Q: Milton/66 under pass, is the busway dependent on widening the bridge? A: Yes
- C: Gemini lot of potential development including health facilities and potential VA facility.

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- Q: Why chose one or the other (Gemini/Cedar) - why not go east/west on either street? A: Would need improved pedestrian walkways to cross from one stop to the other.
- C: Gemini might be an option for future but seems to reduce travel speed. Keep deep in back pocket until development occurs - keep more rapid service on Cedar.
- C: Look at staying on Cedar; maybe consider median stops.
- C: During winter might be issue on Cedar with ice and steep roadway.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Flagstaff Mall:

- Bus operates in mixed traffic, Cedar and Route 66
- Median Busway on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and bike lanes
- Bus-Bike-Right Turn Lanes on Route 66
- TSP/QJ where needed
- Bus access at Office Depot/Mall
- Potential Stations:
  - Cedar and West
  - Mobility hub at Route 66 and Mall
  - Route 66 at Fanning
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Street at Rose
  - Route 66 at Steves
  - Cummings and Rt. 66

### **TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- Q: Would community accept reduce lanes on Route 66 to have a dedicated busway?
- C: Taper lane before mall might be used as bus only and right turn into mall prior to Cummings.
- Have met with Harkins to discuss service and options at the mall.
- Q: Auto driver and rider expectation of median and side boarding. Will this be confusing on 4<sup>th</sup> Street? A: Fort Collins is currently using a median stop with traditional buses.

### **Multi Modal BNSF Options**

Brent Crowther, Kimley Horn, reviewed the options for the BNSF bridge/underpass.

- Bi-directional bus lane to Phoenix Ave and enter bus only lane to TSP at Santa Fe/Beaver.  
Will also bike/pedestrian access.

### **TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- C: Adds vehicular delay at 3 busiest intersections even if adding lanes also impacts pedestrian crossings.
- Large capital investment and needs close coordination with BNSF

- C: Preemption at Beaver: Train has preemption and would have priority over the buses.
- Q: Is the BSNF a deal killer to BRT? A: No. Need improvements for congestion. It helps not just buses but cars, bikes, and pedestrians.
- C: Double left turn at Humphreys will help.

### **Runningway Concepts/ 4<sup>th</sup> St. Median Busway**

- 1 NB/1 SB general lane
- 2 bus lanes with mixing areas on both sides of median stations
  - Add bike lanes on outside
  - Have not assumed new right of way. To maintain 2 NB/SB vehicle lanes will need additional right of way.
  - Only one area with the median station

### **TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- C: Concern about congestion on 4th with only one general purpose lane in each direction.
- C: Concerned about cars following buses into median station. Will need signage and pavement markings to control car access. Could also use gates to control access.
- C: Concern about snow plows with the median curbs.

### **Station Concepts**

Erika reviewed potential station concepts. Stations are branded with additional amenities. Fort Collins operates in railroad row

### **Transit Network**

Erika stated NAIPTA is looking at a potential restructure of the transit system to improve connectivity to spine and where to add service to serve additional neighborhoods. The team will continue to discuss and begin to define potential new routes including more ways to serve NAU campus.

We don't know where downtown connection center will go or if it will stay. Trying to serve more people/faster but where the hub is might drive speed. Not sure how to accommodate other routes at the same hub. Need to determine hub locations first.

### **TAC Discussion - Questions and Comments**

- C: Trying to go fast but still in highly congested areas of town.
- Q: Why would you take a bus from mall to airport take too long and there is free parking at airport? A: very few trips will go from point A to B but will use the service for shorter trips.
- C: Having mobility hub near north end of NAU campus would be preferable to provide better service.

## Communications Plan

Theresa Gunn announced the MoveMeFLG website is online and Stephanie Stearns, NAIPTA, has been trained to manage the site. Dave Wessel's RTP outreach team is finalizing a modal survey which should be available for the public soon.

## FTA Communications

Erika stated the following reports will be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration.

- Alternatives Report
- Environmental Review
- Proposed LPA Report
- Project Development
- Third Party Review
- Fiscal and Technical Capacity Report
- Project Final Report - Final report will also be submitted to the public. A summary will be provided on the MoveMeFLG website.

## Next Steps

- March/April 2016
  - Approve Recommended LPA—NAIPTA BOD Process
  - Entry into Project Development with FTA Plan submittal
  - ADOPT LPA in Cost Feasible Long Range Plan
  - Local Share Funding Commitments
- 2016
  - FTA Small Starts PD Approval (Anticipated)
- 2016/2017
  - Engineering, Preliminary Design, NEPA Process
- 2017 (anticipated)
  - Project Construction Grant Agreement
- TBD
  - Construction
  - BRT Service Opening

## Action Items

- Executive summary and DRAFT final document is next deliverable to TAC. No future meetings planned.