

Minutes
Regional Growth Committee
Meeting of January 15, 2009

A meeting of the Regional Growth Committee was held on Thursday, January 15, 2009 in the offices of the Wasatch Front Regional Council, 295 North Jimmy Doolittle Road, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Welcome and Introductions

Mayor JoAnn Seghini, Vice-Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. Mayor Seghini welcomed committee members and guests. The following were in attendance:

Members, Representatives & Alternates Present:

Justin Allen	Utah Quality Growth Commission
Mick Crandall	UTA
Louenda Downs	Commissioner, Davis County
Russell Fox	Kennecott Land
Jim Horrocks	Air Quality Board
Ahmad Jaber	UDOT
Mark Nord (Representing Mayor Lewis Billings)	Provo City
JoAnn B. Seghini	Mayor, Midvale City
Daniel Snarr	Mayor, Murray City
Wilf Sommerkorn	SLC Planning
Jan Zogmaister	Commissioner, Weber County

Non-Members Present:

John Bennett	GOPB / Quality Growth Commission
Lynn Vinzant	Clinton City
Kip Billings	WFRC
Chuck Chappell	WFRC
LaNiece Davenport	WFRC
Ned Hacker	WFRC
Val John Halford	WFRC
Doug Hattery	WFRC
Jory Johner	WFRC
Pam Jorgensen	WFRC
Sam Klemm	WFRC
Bartly Mathews	WFRC

Members / Representatives excused: Mayor Bruce Burrows, Mayor Peter Corroon and Mayor Kent Money.

1. Approval of Minutes

No action taken

2. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no comments

3. INFORMATION – Natural Hazards Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan

DeeEli Fifield, WFRC, reported that in the year 2000 FEMA passed through Congress a bill called the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act. The Act required jurisdictions (cities, towns, counties) throughout the country to conduct mitigation studies and come up with strategies for dealing with natural hazards in their areas. The Act was passed in 2000 and the first Natural Hazards Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan was formulated in 2003 for the Wasatch Front. All of the jurisdictions in the Wasatch Front Region adopted that plan in 2003.

FEMA requires an update to the Plan every five years. The Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) along with local communities, state and local agencies are pleased to announce the release of the final draft of the 2008 Wasatch Front Natural Hazards Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. Mr. Fifield stated that the final draft of the plan is available for public review on the WFRC website: www.wfrc.org and that State and FEMA approval of this plan is pending. He said that once FEMA approves the Plan, copies will be made available on CD and all jurisdictions will receive a copy. He also indicated that once the 2008 update has final approval from FEMA it will require adoption by the cities, towns and counties.

This Plan is an important aspect of a successful mitigation program whereby natural hazards are identified, vulnerability is assessed and mitigation strategies are recognized in order to minimize their effect. States must have an approved natural hazard mitigation plan in order to qualify for future funding through the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program. This Plan ensures eligibility for increased funding for a community following a federally-declared disaster and may qualify a community for project grants. To be fully eligible for these grants, communities must formally adopt the PDM Plan through a non-binding resolution.

4. INFORMATION – Progress of the Growth Principle Outreach Effort

Val John Halford, WFRC, reported that as of December, WFRC staff members and representatives from Envision Utah had contacted and visited with the planning directors of all 45 municipalities and all three counties within the urbanized area of the Wasatch Front Region. The purpose of these visits was to promote, educate and enlighten planners and planning commissions on the Wasatch Choices 2040 Growth Principles and Vision. The majority of the Region's urban planners were in favor of the Growth Principles and Vision, acknowledging that anticipated growth be well planned and accommodated in the most efficient and cost effective way.

As part of this outreach effort, planning directors were requested to schedule meetings with their planning commissions so that these local decision-makers could also discuss the merits of the Growth Principles and specific implementation strategies that would work for their particular community. To date WFRC staff and Envision Utah have visited with eight planning commissions and the ideals of the Growth Principles have been well received.

The final step in the Wasatch Choices 2040 outreach and education effort would be for each city to formally adopt the Growth Principles. Adoption could be by resolution, as part of the goals and objectives of their general plan, or as a checklist to help screen development proposals.

5. INFORMATION – Wasatch Choices 2040 Visual Library

Bartly Mathews, WFRC, presented the Wasatch Choices 2040 Visual Library. The purpose of the DVD is to provide visual examples of well-planned land use applications and transportation systems that implement the growth principles and strategies adopted by the Regional Council and outlined in the Wasatch Choices 2040 publication. Citizen planners (planning commissions, city councils, county commissioners, etc.) who refer to the image library will be able to better visualize how implementation of the growth principles and strategies could shape their communities.

The Wasatch Choices 2040 Visual Library includes four short movies, of which two movies feature local developments - the City Creek Center (Salt Lake City) and Birkhill at Fireclay (Murray City). Additionally, a population study, age pyramid charts, and a comprehensive planning glossary have been included. With over 1,500 images available, citizen planners throughout the Wasatch Front Region will be able to visualize several growth principle applications for future planning and development within their communities.

A copy of the DVD was distributed to those in attendance and copies may be obtained by contacting the Wasatch Front Regional Council offices. It was noted that copies of the DVD will be distributed to cities and counties throughout the region in conjunction with the Growth Principles outreach effort.

Members of the Regional Growth Committee expressed appreciation to Staff for the time and effort put into making such a high quality resource and felt it will be a tremendous asset to cities and counties in their planning efforts.

6. ACTION – RTP Amendment Process

Val John Halford, WFRC, informed members that a written procedure to successfully address requests to modify or amend the Wasatch Front Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) has been developed and is currently being reviewed by representatives from UDOT, UTA and FHWA. To simplify the amendment process, three levels of modification, ranging from a simple staff modification to a full amendment that requires a new air conformity determination were developed. The three levels are outlined and explained as follows:

- **Level 1 – Staff Modification**

These amendments are minor in nature and would only include changes, clarifications, or corrections to the RTP document wording, mapping, and project information.

Level 1 – Process

These amendments would be reviewed by the WFRC staff members. If staff feels a change is warranted, the amendment could be implemented without additional process beyond that listed below. Level 1 – Staff Modification amendments would require approval by the WFRC Executive Director and use the following procedure:

- a. complete documentation of the change
- b. an errata sheet to be included in the printed document
- c. an errata sheet to be inserted into RTP compact diskette folders
- d. only those entities submitting this type of amendment would be notified of the change
- e. update and notification of amendment changes on the WFRC website

- **Level 2 – Board Modification For Non-Regionally Significant Projects**

These amendments would involve a change in the scope, alignment, or phasing of a non-regionally significant project, including minor arterials or collector facilities. For transit projects, a Level 2 amendment would be necessary for any change or modification in scope, alignment, or phasing of any project other than a fixed guideway facility.

Level 2 – Process

These amendments would be reviewed by city planners, elected officials, Technical Advisory Committees (TAC), County Council of Governments (COG) and the Regional Growth Committee (RGC). The WFRC can delegate approval of these modifications to the RTP, except for the addition of new projects. The approval of Level 2 amendments would require the following procedure:

- a. public comment would be invited on the WFRC website and at the RGC, COGs and WFRC
- b. a written staff response within 30-days to all public comments received
- c. review and recommendation made by the appropriate RGC Technical Advisory Committee
- d. review and recommendation made by the appropriate County Council of Government
- e. review and recommendation made by the Regional Growth Committee
- f. review and approval by the Wasatch Front Regional Council
- g. distribution of amended RTP maps to affected agencies
- h. update and notification of amendment changes on the WFRC website

- **Level 3 – Full Amendment For Regionally Significant Projects**

These types of amendments would involve any change or modification to a regionally significant project as defined by either the RTP or through interagency consultation. The RTP defines a project to be regionally significant if it "serves regional transportation needs, such as access to or from areas outside of the region, major activity centers, major planned developments, or transportation terminals. Included as regionally significant projects would be all projects on principal arterial highways and all fixed guideway transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel". A regionally significant project could also be determined by interagency consultation or based on the results and analysis provided by the WFRC travel model. This level of RTP amendment would also require a new air quality conformity determination and consistency with the WFRC's Congestion Management Program.

Level 3 – Process

These amendments would be reviewed by city planners, elected officials, and the Technical Advisory Committee, the Council Councils of Government, the Regional Growth Committee, and the Wasatch Front Regional Council. The approval of Level 3 amendments would require the following procedures:

- a. a new air quality conformity determination as per current modeling procedures
- b. a 30-day comment period would be advertised and published
- c. a written staff response to all public comments received
- d. determination of the amendment's consistency with the WFRC's Congestion Management Program (CMP)
- e. review and recommendation made by the appropriate RGC Technical Advisory Committee
- f. review and recommendation made by the appropriate County Council of Government
- g. review and recommendation made by the Regional Growth Committee

- h. review and approval by the Wasatch Front Regional Council
- i. distribution of amended RTP maps to affected agencies
- j. update and notification of amendment changes on the WFRC website

Mr. Halford noted, in answer to a question as to how this changes the process we now have, that only Level 1 is left up to the discretion of WFRC staff and that Level 2 and 3 would require an action by the COG.

ACTION: Commissioner Louenda Downs moved that the RGC recommend the Draft RTP Process, as outlined and discussed, be sent on to the Regional Council for their approval. The motion was seconded by Mayor Daniel Snarr and approved unanimously by the members in attendance.

7. INFORMATION – WFRC Air Quality Committee

Kip Billings, WFRC, reported that the WFRC Air Quality Committee will hold its first meeting in February. He stated that since the October Regional Council meeting, when membership on the Air Quality Committee was finalized, WFRC staff has met with a number of state and local agencies involved in air quality issues. The purpose of the meetings was to define the roles and responsibilities of the various agencies and to better understand how the agencies can most effectively work together. Mr. Billings briefly reviewed the *Air Quality Committees & Responsibilities* information sheet that was distributed previous to the meeting and said this information will be part of the discussion at the first meeting of the Air Quality Committee when they meet in February.

Mr. Billings reported that the good news from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is that Salt Lake, Davis, Weber and portions of Box Elder and Tooele Counties will be one area for the new non-attainment designations for PM2.5 standard and that Utah County (MAG) will be in a different area. He also stated that work has already begun to develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to address PM2.5 emission levels to meet the new EPA standards.

There were some comments and concerns expressed regarding the “lumping together” of Salt Lake Davis, Weber and portions of Box Elder and Tooele Counties into one non-attainment area.

8. INFORMATION – Legislative Session 2009

Sam Klemm, WFRC, said that this will be an interesting year for legislation within the State and reported on the following issues:

- Re-Authorization of the Federal Transportation Program. This is a complex bill with many elements. The WFRC is meeting with UDOT, UTA and other interested parties to come up with a unified position. An essential section of the bill deals with funding since the Federal Transportation Trust Fund is now insolvent. Whether it will be made whole through increased gasoline taxes, an infusion of general revenues, or some other means remains unclear.
- Proposed Federal Stimulus Package. The Congress is almost certainly going to pass some sort of stimulus package. WFRC has already sent letters to our federal representatives and spoken with them or their staff about the best methods to facilitate its use such as channeling the money through some of the more flexible programs such as the Surface Transportation Program.

- The State has had to cut back across the board on many programs. They will almost certainly cut more in the upcoming Legislative Session. This has directly impacted many planned highway projects of which the State Legislature has an interest in reviving as many as possible. Their main question is how many projects can be revived, how much will they cost, and where will the money come from. Sources being looked at include increased bonding, increasing gasoline tax, and several other scenarios and/or a combination of the potential sources.
- The Regional Council has interest in a bill that would open a window for Council employees to transfer from the Contributory to Non-Contributory State Retirement System.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Regional Growth Committee will be held at **9:30 a.m. on THURSDAY, March 19, 2009** in the offices of the Wasatch Front Regional Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.