

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING, THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2022
TYLER DEVELOPMENT CENTER, LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
423 WEST FERGUSON, TYLER, TEXAS**



Members Present:

Don Warren, Chair; Ed Broussard; Darin Jennings; Carolyn Caldwell; Cary Nix; Frank Davis and Gary Halbrooks.

Members Absent:

Leslie Black; Dennis Ford; Nathaniel Moran and Vernon Webb.

Staff Present:

Heather Nick; Michael Howell and Shelia Henderson.

Others Present:

Cameron Williams, City of Tyler; Leroy Sparrow, City of Tyler; Kyle Kingma, City of Tyler; Jamal Moharer, NDMJ Transportation Services; Mark Whatley, Burns Commercial Properties; Gaylord Hughey, Attorney; and Larry Vinson, Resident.

Don Warren called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

Ed Broussard moved, seconded by Gary Halbrooks, to approve the minutes from May 26, 2022. Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Action Items:

1. Consider adopting an amendment to the Master Street Plan (MSP) for a portion of the proposed extension of Waljim Street between South Town Drive and Thigpen Drive

Mr. Howell presented the item and clarified that the proposal was a further amendment to a prior amendment to Master Street Plan adopted on March 24, 2022 which added a conceptual route for the extension of Waljim Street extending from West Grande Boulevard south to the intersection of South Broadway Avenue and Centennial Parkway.

He said that both MPO and City of Tyler staff had been contacted from residents of Courtyard Condos and Hollyview Apartments which were located along the proposed route and located Southtown Drive and Thigpen Drive who had concerns that a road extension could eliminate all of the usable parking on their respective sites. Mr. Howell said that City of Tyler staff had requested that the proposed connection between South Town Drive and Thigpen drive be removed, and mentioned that the remaining roadway sections still provided vital connectivity to their respective regions even after being disconnected.

Mr. Howell noted that the staff held a public open house to receive public feedback on the proposed amendment on July 7, 2022. The meeting was well attended by developers and residents who attended the first round of meetings in March. While there was continued talk about alternate routes

from some attendees, the majority of the residents had positive comments about the development of the conceptual route. The attendees were also notified that the Engineering Department has added a preliminary engineering study for Waljim Street to the Capital Improvement Projects list and which, when funded, will do an in-depth analysis of alternate routes and provide cost estimates.

Ms. Caldwell asked if the existing residential driveways were gated to prevent cut-through traffic. My. Halbrooks responded that there was not a direct route through the parking lots.

Mr. Halbrooks disclosed to the Committee that his mother owned a condo unit in Hollyview Apartments and that he facilitated a meeting between the Hollyview Board of Directors and City staff. He stated that he would refrain from voting on the item.

Mr. Howell stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) unanimously recommends that the Policy Committee adopt the amendment to the Master Street Plan.

Mr. Jennings spoke about the next steps which included Tyler hiring a consultant to perform an engineering study for the corridor. Mr. Warren shared that the name of project was Broadway relief route study and stated different plans and routes would be studied as part of the project.

Ed Broussard moved, seconded by Cary Nix, to adopt the amendment to the Master Street Plan.
Ayes: Don Warren, Ed Broussard, Darin Jennings, Carolyn Caldwell, Cary Nix, Frank Davis
Nos: none
Abstain: Gary Halbrooks

2. Consider adopting an amendment to the FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to allow Tyler Transit to utilize funds to plan for a new transit facility

Mr. Howell presented the item stating that Tyler Transit's administration and operations staff has grown as the Tyler population has grown and has identified a need to expand their offices. The proposed amendment would allow the Transit staff to begin the process of identifying a building close to their existing office or an undeveloped parcel to construct a new building to provide additional office space for the Transit staff.

Mr. Sparrow spoke briefly about the staffing needs and space constraints of their current location in the Cotton Belt Depot and reiterated that Transit was not intending to abandon the depot. The main Transit offices are proposed to stay in the Depot and the new location would serve as a satellite office.

Mr. Howell stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) unanimously recommends that the Policy Committee adopt the amendments to the FY 2023 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program.

Frank Davis moved, seconded by Carolyn Caldwell, to adopt the amendments to the FY 2023-2026 TIP.
Motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Staff Updates:

1. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Nick provided an update on the contracts being awarded for the Travel Demand Model and Downtown Tyler Traffic Study. She stated that the Travel Demand Model came in under budget while the Traffic Study was looking to come in over budget and stated that the staff would be bringing a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) amendment to the Committee to balance the allocations for each project when final totals were determined.

Ms. Nick also announced that Michael Howell had been promoted to the position of MPO Director. She mentioned that Michael had been working for the MPO in various roles since 2014 and held the certifications of AICP and EIT. Ms. Nick concluded saying congratulations.

Gaylord Hughey interjected stating the TxDOT has allocated funding for Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure and how that factored into the MPO's plans. Mr. Howell responded that he had spoken with the TxDOT staff developing the Statewide EV plan and was told that TxDOT was allocating funding in multiple phases. The first phase focused on establishing an EV station every 50 miles on the interstate system. Phase 2 would involve TxDOT working with the MPOs to get more local locations established. Mr. Hughey then began talking about upcoming funding being available for green energy and said that he encouraged the MPO to continue searching for funding opportunities.

2. Upcoming Meeting Dates

Mr. Howell provided notice of the upcoming Technical Advisory Committee meeting on September 1, 2022 and the next Transportation Policy Committee meeting scheduled on September 22, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.