

Kendall County - Boerne - Fair Oaks Transportation Committee Minutes

**18 February 2020
2:00 – 4:15 p.m.**

The Kendall County - Boerne - Fair Oaks Transportation Committee convened in the Boerne Independent School Board administrative building's training wing.

In Attendance:

Co-chair Don Durden, as well as David Anderson, Dan Banks, Tim Bannwolf, Kim Blohm, Rankin D'Spain, Ben Eldredge, Jonah Evans, Ben Bunker, Marcus Garcia, Bob Hartwig, John Kight, Gary Louie, Northern Hendricks, Rich Sena, and scrivener Elaine Bretschneider.

Not in Attendance: Bryce Boddie, Josh Limmer, Bob Manning, Mark Stahl, and Stephen Zoeller.

Visitors: Approximately two dozen visitors were in attendance

Item 1: Opening comments

Co-chair Don Durden opened the meeting by welcoming the committee. He explained that scrivener Elaine Maltsberger could not attend today and Elaine Bretschneider would act as scribe in substitute. No committee members had opening comments.

Item 2: Comments from the public

Co-chair Don Durden asked for public comments. None were voiced.

Item 3: Minutes:

Durden and Ben Eldredge explained that at the last meeting the committee approved the minutes of January 7th believing they were January 21st. Durden rescinded that and asked for a motion to approve Jan. 21st and Feb. 4th minutes.

Jonah Evans pointed out that there was not currently a quorum as required. Durden agreed to come back to the minutes later in the meeting, acknowledged

the importance of a quorum - particularly for decisions on controversial matters, and thanked Evans.

Item 4: Presentation by Buddy Kuhn, Alamo Heights City Manager

Durden asked Tim Bannwolf to introduce guest presenter, Buddy Kuhn, to the committee. Bannwolf explained that Kuhn had been appointed to be a part of this group, but his official City of Alamo Heights Manager duties kept him too busy to participate.

Kuhn said he lives in Kendalia and has commuted to Alamo Heights for nearly thirty years. He described the City of Alamo Heights' vision to redo 1.18 miles of Broadway, take 29 acres out of the floodplain to reach a 25-year flood event risk, and bury utilities while making boulevard style, complete streets.

To begin the project planning process, Kuhn's team targeted the following topics to leverage money from organizations: 1. Significant flooding; 2. TxDOT ownership of Broadway – Austin Hwy to Burr; 3. Aging water and sewer lines; 4. Deteriorated sidewalks, curbs and drainage inlets; 5. No bike lanes; and 6. ADA issues.

Kuhn explained the project has federal dollars, state dollars, hopefully county dollars, and city dollars, as it is a regional issue. It is currently undergoing environmental study now and he is focused on phasing, wanting to limit the impact to businesses. Kuhn described the numbers, "Our current project funding gap is 16 million. TxDOT has already spent \$1.2 million for a project that we don't know if it's going to make it. We think it is, but only the voters will tell us at the bond election on May 2nd.

Bannwolf asked Kuhn how the City of Alamo Heights got so many to come to the table with funding to make it all happen?

Kuhn stated that initially AAMPO funded a large part of the project because it is a multimodal, shared use path design. Alamo Heights then leveraged that to bring the other funders in.

Bannwolf inquired if scooters are part of that shared use? Kuhn replied, Alamo Heights mirrored COSA's ordinance limiting scooter companies and has decided to keep them as street, not sidewalk traffic.

Durden asked who's going to pick up the slack if the project goes over budget? Kuhn answered that there's 25% added to current numbers for buffer and Alamo Heights is budgeting strategically with their healthy General Fund. The City of Alamo Heights is yet to contract with TxDOT on which entity would be responsible for covering budget overrun.

Kim Blohm asked how Alamo Heights is working with the public to alleviate business communication? Kuhn described their current work now to be stakeholder meetings for landowners and business owners.

Eldredge asked for any further recommendations beyond ductbanks that should be considered as future proofing infrastructure? Kuhn recommended planning anything into the project that would mean not having to dig up the streets again, such as bringing gas, water and telecom companies to the table and informing them that they are to plan any major work for during construction.

Visitor Wanda McCarthy asked the following:

1. Do you already own the right of way where you'll be making improvements?
2. Of the 25 acres, what percentage of that is in the floodplain? What percentage of that are you fixing?
3. What is your method of communicating to the general public?
4. Who are your stakeholders and how are they contacted?

Kuhn stated stakeholders were originally contacted by information from the Council and asked to attend meetings. The general public has been reached on Facebook, Next Door, the City of Alamo Heights website, mailings, and via water bills. Kuhn replied that 29 acres would be a very small percentage, but a great improvement in getting Alamo Heights to a 25-year flood event. He explained that TxDOT owns the right of way, so Alamo Heights will not be acquiring anything.

Item 5: Comments regarding the possibility of recommending Old San Antonio Road inclusion in the low hanging fruit basket – Jeanne Geiger, Deputy Director Alamo Area MPO

Durden introduced Jeanne Geiger, AAMPO Deputy Director to address planning and funding options for Old San Antonio Road.

Geiger reminded the committee that AAMPO funding is not a grant program, but a reimbursable program. She addressed the suggestion that the street near the Kronkosky Place off of I-10 could probably use some widening and is prime for some development.

While Geiger underscored to Eldredge that AAMPO does not consider projects based on “low-hanging fruit” criteria, but rather their multimodal impact to the region, she encouraged the committee to consider the project phasing timeline, double whatever their estimated project cost, and carefully examine whether “federalizing” the project would be desired. Geiger stated the region needs to submit one or two really good projects with strong citizen support by the due date of April 1st.

Durden asked, “How long after that would the project actually start construction?” Geiger answered, “A lot of things factor into that. Our board will be programming funds for partial 2025, and through into 2028. Just because your fund may end up in 2027, doesn’t mean you’re stuck there. If funding is available, the project is ready to go, it can let.”

Durden suggested that there may be an additional, locally funded phase of resurfacing and providing a continuous left turn lane while moving forward to the AAMPO for funding on this particular project.

Evans recommended adding this project to the Crowdsourcing Viewer tool so that the public has the opportunity to look at and comment on it, and Durden agreed.

Geiger answered Eldredge, David Anderson, and Durden’s questions regarding bike-ability and multimodal use compliance: the bike lane “could be a six-foot striped separate lane on either side of the road” and determinations of multimodal compliance would begin at the AAMPO level.

Item 6: KCBFOTC GIS Viewers – Access and Use Protocol

Durden called for a common vocabulary to be used henceforth of Crowdsourcing Viewer (accessed at www.kcbfotc.com), the public input online map, and for the Committee Viewer, the committee-facing map that will be used to prioritize suggested projects. He brought up the public-facing issue of transparency of when, if ever, to delete a comment made by the public on the Crowdsourcing Viewer and how to record that process.

Durden hoped the first motion would be a statement at the top of the Crowdscore Viewer that all new suggestions by the public, including committee members, should be made within the Crowdscore Viewer.

Durden then asked Evans of the GIS Committee to lead the discussion. Evans made the following recommendations:

1st Recommendation: “The Crowdscore viewer URL: I recommend simplifying that.”

2nd Recommendation: “Make clarification on how the Committee Viewer can be used. I added some different text: “The purpose of the Committee Viewer is to provide the committee with a tool for visualizing and experimenting with transportation project ideas. Initially, we may save all contributions on a separate layer and use the tool to narrow down final projects to be included in the committee’s recommendations.”

Blohm explained that the first phase of public comments will be considered through March 9th, though feedback comments will continue in further phases.

Evans brought up that the Committee Viewer isn’t being utilized during the first phase and he would like to take the opportunity to let committee members experiment with the features and layers on the map for how to plot projects. He continued:

3rd Recommendation: “For making modifications or changes, because it’s a two-week interval until we meet, if the GIS Committee or a subgroup meets and identifies a relatively minor change - for example, if we want to make the email a required field, I suggest we email the entire committee and allow three days to go by. In those three days if one member says I have a concern then press pause until next committee meeting, have discussion and vote on it. If nobody raises a concern, one of the chairmen would make the recommendation to the AAMPO and we would then include that change in the next committee meeting’s minutes.”

4th Recommendation: “Changes for deleting features in the Committee viewer, I added: “The Committee Viewer enables users to edit and delete features. No member of the committee will delete or modify features made by other members without working directly with them or without permission from them. In my view this feature is important for the tool to be most

useful to the committee, but it requires members to agree to use it responsibly. There is the risk of accidentally or intentionally deleting someone's comments. If we don't have that tool though it is very likely we'll make features by accident and then we're stuck without the ability to delete it. Again, it is only accessible by the members of the committee."

Evans confirmed to Dan Banks that the Committee Viewer is still password protected. He then informed Anderson that slashes or squiggles on the Crowdsourcing Viewer will remain unless it's profanity.

Eldredge supported editing on the Committee Viewer as long as the committee member deletes their own material. Marcus Garcia underscored that this is only for the Committee Viewer's committee member comments, not any public comments.

Geiger expressed a public credibility concern "that things are put on the Committee Viewer that aren't on the public viewer. Because then if a project is picked, the public says where did that project come from, it wasn't on the viewer?"

Eldredge stated that a committee would need to decide what actually gets reported over to the Committee Viewer from the Crowdsourcing Viewer.

Evans explained that his goal for the Committee Viewer during phase one is for the committee members to learn how to use it. "First, for creating experimental project ideas. The second stage for bringing in actual project ideas for consideration by the committee."

Gary Louie, Durden and Hartwig continued discussion of how and when the Crowdsourcing Viewer data would be cleaned up and moved to the Committee Viewer.

Hartwig explained the proposed motion: "That we apply the Committee and Crowdsourcing Viewer tiered concept, with the understanding that all projects have to be proposed on the Crowdsourcing viewer. There should be no new projects put on the Committee Viewer. The projects are going to need scrubbed, recommended, whatever from the Crowdsourcing Viewer onto the Committee Viewer. That we will then use to narrow down a list of projects."

Anderson asked, is the committee as a whole going to whittle it down or just the Projects Committee? Eldredge responded, "I think it's the committee as a whole. It's called the Transportation Planning Committee."

Evans expressed that he was still a little confused about the motion.

AAMPO staff suggested, "We actually have enough information now to move from Crowdsourcing to the Committee viewer. We could do a test. Suggest we have a second meeting to evaluate how we would do that and bring that back to this committee. Then propose a separate meeting to evaluate the projects that have been proposed to figure out how to put the layers: A proof of concept." Further, a copy of the data will be used for the test, so it won't affect the system and the public won't see it.

Louie recommended that authority be granted to make a public record of anything that is scrubbed in the cleanup process, such as duplication of projects.

Evans asked to add some clarification to the proposed motion: "Maybe for the Committee Viewer, it's too complex to use it as a tool for visualizing projects on its own." He inquired, for "the process for modifications, do people feel that is a reasonable, transferrable process, or should each modification come to a full committee meeting for discussion each time?"

Eldredge and Evans explained that this would mean an email sent out with a voting period of three days for if something structurally needs to be changed in the viewer, such as requiring name fields. For example, if Evans gets a new layer of property easements from Texas Parks & Wildlife and would "like to add that layer to the tool, waiting two weeks to have a discussion to vote about that seems excessive."

Geiger said AAMPO is not concerned with adding data layers, only with deleting public comments.

Northern Hendricks offered that outreach "could make sure that the public understands that if you have a dissenting point of view or opposition to a line, that you need to please put it in the comments."

Evans asked to suspend the vote until committee members have time to read the recommendations.

Hartwig formally withdrew his motion. Evans will first send the email for discussion to Durden, Garcia, and Hartwig and then Durden will email the motion out to the committee for a vote within three days.

Ben Eldredge encouraged the committee to input their “wishlist” and wild ideas on the Crowdsourcing Viewer: “As we move it over to the Committee viewer and narrow it down, there are going to be some areas where policy and planning processes can go into effect so instead of just thinking about it in terms of what’s possible in the near term, I think we need to move forward with a full comprehensive idea.”

Item 7: Updates from subcommittees (if time permits)

a. Projects Subcommittee – Dan Banks

b. Public Outreach Subcommittee – Gary Louie

c. GIS Subcommittee – Marcus Garcia, Jonah Evans

Bannwolf informed the committee that the Subject Expert Committee would like to have a public meeting in the evening of March 4th for a conversation with Jennifer Fening of Smart Columbus (Ohio) Initiative and hopefully, the city engineer from Carmel, Indiana. Fening will speak about Columbus’ regional strategic planning and the Carmel city engineer would discuss roundabouts. Blohm will assist Bannwolf in finding a hosting space for the meeting.

Blohm presented the new public outreach handout. Five thousand were printed for the first feedback phase and they provide five ways for the public to comment. Comments can be made by the following: 1. maphere.org; 2. email to comments@kcbfotc.com; 3. mail letter to chamber; 4. leave a comment card to a local chamber of commerce (Comfort or Boerne); and 5. attend a committee meeting. These handouts will go to the school districts and businesses. Blohm asked those present to take as many as needed for their meetings or connections.

3,000 postcards are in production for residents who are older than 65 and own land in Kendall County. It should go out next week and they can mail back a comment card.

Ben Bunker and Kim Blohm are partnering with the BISD photography/ videography students to create short videos of six different accessibility

scenarios. If you have a suggestion for a place to film: an intersection, downtown shopping, parking, biking, wheelchair accessibility, please let Blohm know.

Banks asked if the handout will be digital and Blohm responded yes, and it will be going out to many local print publications and online sites.

Hendricks asked members to promote the handout at any official meetings. Public outreach, “can promote it, put it on the calendar and can bring someone in and talk about the viewer and the process.”

Banks of the Projects Committee asked Garcia if the roundabout drawings were done and Garcia said some modifications were being made. Banks stated the Projects Committee found: “12 intersections that we want to do some work on; discussed the road categories to use; and recommended limiting the right of way to no more than 110 feet anywhere in Kendall County, Boerne or Fair Oaks.” The Projects Committee will continue meeting with the GIS Committee.

Evans of the GIS Committee asked members to please login to the Crowdsourcing Viewer and review the public’s input even if they don’t have a feature to make. Evans also made a note on the website that says, “Features on this website come from all members of the community, including committee members.” He encouraged people on the committee to share their comments, too.

Item 8: Comments from the public

Durden stated, this is the final opportunity for public comments to be received for today’s meeting.

McCarthy asked AAMPO if it was possible to “unlike” on the Crowdsourcing Viewer. AAMPO staff responded no, it would need to be written in the comments. McCarthy noted that if you have more than one issue, safety and congestion, you can’t do that without putting it in the comments, but there is a very limited amount of comment space.

Eldredge stated, “You can add comments to comments.”

McCarthy asked, “Is the Committee Viewer going to be available to be seen by the general public at some point? Durden replied he thinks “it will be, but it won’t be able to be manipulated by the public.”

McCarthy commented on roundabouts, “They are tough for long trailers. It doesn’t work for rural counties or trucks in major intersections. And we’re still a

rural county. I am concerned about roundabouts by a high school with low-ability drivers rushing to schools.”

Mrs. Willoughby said, “I think you have enough members now to approve the minutes.”

Denise Dever asked if the Texas Historical Commission’s map layers that were required by TxDOT for the Kendall Gateway study could be made public on the Crowdsourcing Viewer as AAMPO has the data. “It’s required when you build the road.”

AAMPO staff stated it would be on the Committee Viewer map, not Crowdsourcing because that has no data layers except for what came from the company Open Streets on the base map layer.

Joan Rogers, City of Boerne, brought a map about sidewalk projects in the City of Boerne for this and the next fiscal year that’s been finalized and approved by Council. The committee had requested this two weeks ago.

Durden thanked her and replied, “We had forwarded some of the twelve maps that the Projects Committee had identified to Mr. Thompson and asked him to look at these and see if there were any fatal flaws that would prevent them from being incorporated into the “low-hanging fruit basket” and I have not heard back from him. Do you know if he’s having any problems looking at those?” Rogers replied that she would talk to Mr. Thompson about it.

Durden recognized a request to reapprove the minutes now that the committee had a quorum. Banks moved to approve, and Evans seconded, with no one opposed.

Item 9: Adjournment

The motion carried and Durden adjourned the committee.