

Regional Planning Advisory Council

Thursday, April 11, 2013

Minutes

Members & Alternates Attending:

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|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Becky Adams | Arkansas Department of Health |
| 2. Marcia Cook | City of Sherwood |
| 3. Charles Cummings (Chairman) | Trucking & Freight |
| 4. Gary DalPorto (Nonvoting) | Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) |
| 5. Coreen Frasier | BACA |
| 6. Dave Green | City of Bryant |
| 7. Sybil Hampton | City of Little Rock |
| 8. Bob Hardin | City of North Little Rock |
| 9. Paul Hastings | City of Little Rock |
| 10. Todd Larson | City of North Little Rock |
| 11. Matthew Long | Central Arkansas Transit Authority (CATA) |
| 12. Peter Mehl | City of Conway |
| 13. Kareem Moody | Pulaski Technical College (PTC) |
| 14. Buckley O'Mell | Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce |
| 15. Tim Ragsdale | Disabilities Community |
| 16. Dan Roda | City of Little Rock |
| 17. Patrick Stair | Sierra Club |
| 18. Jack Stowe | City of Maumelle |
| 19. Regina Taylor | Youth Development |

Consultants:

- | | |
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| 1. Kevin Tilbury | Gresham Smith & Partners (GS&P) |
| 2. Lindsay Puckett | GS&P |

Metroplan Staff and Guests:

- | | |
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| 1. Lynn Bell | Graphics Specialist |
| 2. Susan Dollar | Transportation Planner |
| 3. Casey Covington | CARTS Study Director |
| 4. Richard Magee | Deputy Director |
| 5. Jim McKenzie | Executive Director |
| 6. John Todd | Maumelle Planning Commission |
| 7. Kelly Volin | Planner |

1. Call to Order

RPAC Chairman Charles Cummings called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon. The meeting was held in the Jeffrey Hawkins Conference Room, 501 W. Markham Street, Little Rock.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Council considered the minutes of March 26th.

MOTION by, second by

"To approve the Minutes of March 26, 2013, as prepared."

PASSED

3. Summary of METRO 2030.2 Vision

Kevin Tilbury summarized the vision that was reaffirmed in the most recent plan update, METRO 2030.2. Following this presentation, the RPAC briefly discussed the Metro 2030.2 Vision in light of the additional detailed provided in the presentation. The committee unanimously reconfirmed moving ahead using the vision from Metro 2030.2 as a base.

4. Breakout Groups: Major Trend Identification

RPAC members worked in groups to brainstorm some of the major trends with which the region will be confronted in the next 30 to 40 years. Following is a summary of each group's ideas.

Table 1 (Facilitated by Casey)

Demographic, Housing, Development

- Changes in housing preference are already being seen in both larger and smaller cities within the region, this is partially due to changing demographics
- Millennials will be a larger group than the baby boomers, development and transportation choices should consider the desire of the millennials (demographics to have a large impact)
- Political factor will have a large impact on development decisions (not always supporting of new designs)
- Development/Housing changes that were often associated with the west and east coast are now being seen in other southern cities, likely to impact the central Arkansas region over the next decade
- People want maximum mobility options
- Many developers are slow to change, older mentality of signal family suburban development likely to continue unless developers are educated on alternatives

Business

- Businesses and economic development opportunities will have a large impact on region economic health
- 3D printing is likely to impact nation regarding shopping patterns and warehousing

Transportation

- Bicycling is increasing in popularity, can be faster than car
- Higher transit service will work best when destinations are on the line, if it is difficult to reach your destination transit will not work well

Health

- More active lifestyles will be desired
- Employers are benefiting from lower insurance premiums due to healthier employees

Education

- Online Education will impact higher education as it become less center focused (not everyone will have to drive or live on campuses)
- Secondary education is slower to change (Many families continue to seek schools outside Pulaski county – education needs to be focused on all)
- Education has become reactive and has lead to less creativity among Americans (will impact the economy if not addressed)
- Current education system has driven new developments and associated jobs to exterior

Table 2 (Facilitated by Susan and Kelly)

Economic

- US Standard of Living undergoing adjustment (moving from inflated, unrealistic to more realistic standard)
 - E.g. smaller houses
 - Fuel – efficient vehicles
 - Fix-it-first maintenance (US has preferred to build new)
- Commuting issues (how do we address them)
 - How expensive it's getting
 - Traffic congestion
 - Increasing opportunities
 - Providing options and incentives to employers to use alt. transportation.

Health

- Aging boomers
- Access to health care facilities (problems for all)
- Unknown healthcare provisions
- Need to familiarize people with new options, technology and opportunities
- Additional transit to health centers
- Loss of mobility equates to isolation and loss of functionality
- Access to basic needs (food, water, shelter, medical services)

Development

- School choice impacts?
 - Siting of schools – impacts?

- Transit could affect land value – impacts?
- Provide sidewalks everywhere – make it the norm
- Telecommuting becoming more prevalent
- Energy efficient housing
 - Institutional changes to promote it (e.g. Banks, lending companies, gov't, etc.)
- High-speed broadband connections – universal access for all incomes
- Use technology to attract young professionals
- Regional neighborhood parks
- Where is the money coming from?

Table 3 (Facilitated by Lindsay)

Transportation

- Vehicle technology – the technology of alternative fuel vehicles will continue to evolve and affordability of these vehicles will lead to increased usage
- Vehicle technology – integration of technology into vehicles (i.e. dashboard screens) will impact routing around congested areas
- Transit – a good transit system will be dependent on the development of the regional arterial street system, and then the development of a robust bus network feeding into the arterials
- Transit – more coordination with private developers will be required to create transit oriented developments, and an adequate amount of parking will be needed to support light rail (especially for commuters)
- Freight and rail - 3-D printing could cause an increase in freight and rail movement in the US/region if the printing is no longer being imported from other counties. This has implications for economic development and labor.
- Distribution of goods – delivery of groceries and other small household goods will be dependent on disposable household income or personal lack of mobility.

Demographics and Housing

- Housing – the region will continue to see a trend of people choosing a more urban lifestyle (especially due to lower transportation costs with access to jobs and goods in urban areas)
- Housing – downsizing of housing will continue
- Housing – cultural issues will drive housing choices

Environment

- Educating people in the region about making wise environmental choices is important through ICA. People are not yet concerned about the environment to the point that they are willing to make changes.
- Regulations will change. I.e. Fracking is currently making it cheaper now for compressed natural gas (CNG) to be accessed, but is the process affecting our water sources and is it related to the earthquakes that have occurred in central Arkansas?

Economy

- The economy might not expand in the metro region as rapidly as people may want unless the quality of education changes in order to create a greater educated workforce that attracts major companies to the region

Overall comments

- Technology is the #1 external factor that will affect change
- Creating a foundation for transportation choices must be made
- Land use planning has to be addressed across the region in connection with transportation planning

Table 4 (Facilitated by Kevin)

Transportation

- Personal mobility – smaller cars will make it more difficult to carpool
- Personal mobility – Mobility needs must be addressed for an aging population and a younger generation
- Personal mobility – the desire and need to walk and bike will increase
- Roadway Capacity – when the system hits capacity, will technology enhance traveler communication? Incident management systems will need ongoing maintenance
- Personal connectivity – Telecommunication will reduce the need for travel
- Funding – The national transportation policy will have a major influence
- Funding – Gas tax revenue will be reduced, especially when more “green” vehicles (electric/hybrid) are used

Environment

- Fuel sources – oil dependence will continue to have negative environmental impacts

- Climate change – it could become too hot to walk and bike
- Climate change – the extreme weather will impact drainage infrastructure building practices will need to adapt
- The public perception of sustainability and “the environment” will impact future practices (i.e. recycling, driving habits, etc.)

Demographics and Housing

- Demographics – the population is growing more diverse (i.e. growing Hispanic and Latino population). This will affect how different races will be included and connected.
- Demographics – more young people are becoming homeless
- Demographics – new generations will be more receptive to alternative modes of transportation
- Housing – the concept of “drive til you qualify” will no longer exist
- Housing – growing trend or preference toward downsizing, and having smaller homes that are closer into urban areas
- Housing – location of housing will have a more walkable neighborhood focus (proximity to groceries, parks, schools)

6. Other Business and Next Meeting

The next meeting is set for Tuesday, April 30. Additional information will be forthcoming, but mark your calendars now.

7. Adjourn

With no further business brought forward, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:30 p.m.