

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD BY MORGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
IN REGULAR SCHEDULED OPEN PUBLIC SESSION ON
MONDAY, JULY 15, 2019 AT 4:00 P.M., IN THE COUNCIL ROOM OF
THE CITY OFFICE LOCATED AT 90 WEST YOUNG STREET**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Pro Tem Tony London, Ray Little, Ron Blunck, and Tina Cannon

GUESTS PRESENT: Ty Bailey, Denise Woods, COG Secretary,

EXCUSED MEMBERS: Jeff Richins, Kelly Preece, Robert Kilmer, Doug Jacobs, and Roland Haslam

OTHERS PRESENT: Andrew Willis, NorthFront Business Center, and Cory Martin, Young Dodge

This meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by Chairman Pro Tem Tony London.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of the Morgan Council of Governments Meeting – June 17, 2019.

MOTION: Tina Cannon moved to approve the minutes of the Morgan County Council of Governments meeting held on June 17, 2019.

SECOND: Ron Blunck

The vote was unanimous to approve the minutes as written.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

REPORTS FROM COG MEMBERS ASSIGNED TO ATTEND WFRC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tina Cannon – NaCO (National Association of Counties) Transportation Committee Meeting – Tina distributed the 2019 Policy Briefs, to be made a part of these minutes, which were passed at the meeting she attended in Las Vegas. She stated in the new infrastructure bill the administration would bypass the state departments of transportation and fund county projects separately. WFRC was pushing the wording be "fund local governments and AOGs." She stated the rural counties at NaCO pushed back hard. She would continue to advocate for Morgan to pay the "going wage rate" on the projects. She stated it didn't make sense for the local governments to be paying the same labor rate as what was paid in New York or California. She mentioned the need for region specific wage rates. She stated it was an urban/rural split at WFRC. She stated Davis County had 19 miles of county roads and Morgan County had over 108 miles of county roads.

NEW GROWTH – YTD BUILDING PERMITS & OCCUPANCY – CITY/COUNTY

Ty Bailey reported that Morgan City had 1 building permit issued in July.

Tina stated year-to-date the County had 72 building permits and 22 of those were single family permits.

ECONOMIC PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

Tina Cannon – She mentioned a seminar she attended given by Doug Griffiths who was an expert on economic development. She stated he wrote a book entitled "13 Ways to Kill Your Community" and distributed a handout from the seminar to each member of COG. She said he did a fantastic job of bringing economic development to a small community and how we impact economic prosperity through everyday actions in our communities.

She stated the County was down \$26 Million in commercial properties since 2002 and in the same time up \$474 Million in residential growth. She mentioned the lack of commercial property available in Morgan County. There were two companies interested in the grant from GOED but there isn't anything available/buildable.

Discussion regarding the companies; they needed more space, and both were also looking for space outside of Morgan County if necessary; wanted to move now; would be willing to build; needed commercial property and highspeed internet. Discussion regarding several commercial pieces of property within the City. The need for commercial builders needed to be communicated.

MOTION: Ron Blunck moved to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: Tina Cannon

The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting.

This meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.


Denise Woods, COG Secretary

These minutes were approved at the August 19, 2019 meeting.

2019 POLICY BRIEF

SUPPORT COUNTY PRIORITIES IN ANY NEW INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE

QUICK FACTS

- Owning more roads and bridges than any other government entity, counties play a critical role in our nation's transportation system
- Counties own and maintain 46 percent of all public roads and maintain 38 percent of all public bridges
- Counties own or are part of governing authorities that operate over a third of the nation's transit systems and airports

ACTION NEEDED:

Urge your members of Congress to support county transportation and infrastructure priorities in any new infrastructure bill presented by Congress.

BACKGROUND:

Counties play a critical role in the nation's transportation system, owning 46 percent of all public roads (compared to the 32 percent of public roads owned by cities and townships, 19 percent by states, and 3 percent by the federal government) and 38 percent of the nation's bridge inventory, and are involved with a third of the nation's transit systems and airports that connect residents, communities and businesses.

In the 116th Congress, there is renewed interest on Capitol Hill to pass a bipartisan, comprehensive infrastructure package. The U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure intends to unveil an infrastructure policy measure as early as summer 2019. Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) has outlined several priorities he plans to address in a final package, including sustainable funding for large-scale construction and maintenance projects, alternative revenue sources for highways and transit, harbors and airports, funding for freight corridors and an emphasis on infrastructure resilience to withstand severe weather.

In February 2018, President Donald Trump introduced the administration's plan for an infrastructure package, which totaled \$1.5 trillion. While this plan primarily included grant funding and regulatory reform, the White House is expected to submit a new infrastructure plan in the coming months that contains an increased federal investment.

While past surface transportation authorizations such as MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141) and the FAST Act (P.L. 114-94) focused on setting policy, this potential infrastructure plan will likely focus on actual project conception and construction. The administration has expressed its intent to work with Congress as they craft legislation.

NACo believes that counties should be recognized as major owners of transportation infrastructure in any potential package presented by Congress or the administration. Furthermore, federal funding levels and local authority should adequately reflect the county role in the nation's transportation system. NACo believes that a user-pay approach should continue to be the cornerstone of federal transportation funding and that federal policy should provide counties the flexibility to use additional financing tools. Such policies include:

- **New, dedicated federal funding must be part of any new infrastructure package:** While NACo supports public-private partnerships (P3's) for project development, it is important that any infrastructure package provide funding to those

Counties urge Congress to include the following county priorities in a surface transportation bill:

- **Establish funding certainty through a long-term surface transportation reauthorization:** Counties rely on the certainty of federal funding to plan and execute both major and minor transportation projects. For counties to confidently commit to critical transportation projects, a reauthorization must deliver consistent funding over several fiscal years.
- **Promote long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund:** In order to maintain a robust infrastructure network, the Highway Trust Fund must remain solvent. NACo advocates for an “all tools in the toolbox” approach to accomplishing this, including increased usage of user-fees to support surface transportation infrastructure.
- **Provide direct funding to counties and increase local decision-making authority:** Counties encourage Congress to expand the eligibility pool for direct funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) to provide communities between 50,000 and 200,000 access to dedicated federal funds. We also support increasing local decision-making authority for STBGP project selection for communities under 50,000.
- **Maintain and increase the set-aside for off-system bridges:** Under current law, counties receive roughly \$777 million annually for off-system bridges. Amending the basis for the set-aside to a more contemporary appropriation level would provide the funding increase needed for counties to safely maintain and operate these structures.
- **Streamline the federal permitting process:** NACo supports a streamlining of the federal permitting process through

concurrent reviews and increased thresholds for categorical exclusions, which can help reduce project delays.

For further information, contact: Jessica Jennings at 202.942.4264 or jjennings@naco.org.



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2019 POLICY BRIEF

SUPPORT COUNTY PRIORITIES IN A SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION BILL

QUICK FACTS

- Owning more roads (46 percent) and bridges (38 percent) than any other government entity, counties play a critical role in our nation's transportation system.
- Counties are directly involved in the operation of 78 percent of the nation's public transit systems.
- Counties rely on a strong federal-state-local partnership to operate and maintain the infrastructure that keeps Americans moving.
- Funding for highway and transit programs expires in September 2020 and any new package must adequately reflect the role counties play in the national transportation network.

ACTION NEEDED:

Urge your Members of Congress to support county priorities as Congress works to reauthorize the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

BACKGROUND:

Counties play a critical role in the nation's surface transportation system, owning 46 percent of all public roads (compared to the 32 percent of public roads owned by cities and townships, 19 percent by states, and 3 percent by the federal government) and 38 percent of the National Bridge Inventory. Counties also operate and maintain 78 percent of the nation's transit systems and a third of public airports that connect residents, communities and our national economy.

Following a series of stopgap extensions and the expiration of MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141), President Obama signed the bipartisan FAST Act (P.L. 114-94) in December 2015, representing the first long-term commitment to investing in our nation's surface transportation infrastructure in over a decade. Administered by the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, the FAST Act included \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway development and maintenance, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail and research, technology and statistics programs.

Among the many provisions of the FAST Act, the five-year authorization bill provided increased funding for locally-owned infrastructure, including protected funding for off-system bridges, approved funding for rural and urban public transportation systems, necessary reforms to MAP-21 to expedite project delivery through streamlined approval process, and direct funding to local decision-makers.

The FAST Act expires September 30, 2020. Consistent federal investment through a new long-term surface transportation reauthorization, developed in consultation with federal, state and local partners, would allow counties to address much-needed infrastructure improvements.

Future surface transportation legislation must preserve local decision-making, direct federal investments to local governments and streamline the regulatory landscape to save money and ensure strong environmental stewardship. Federal funding levels and local authority should adequately reflect the county role in the nation's transportation system. A user-pay approach should continue to be the cornerstone of federal transportation funding, and federal policy should provide counties with the flexibility to use additional financing tools.

parts of the country where private investment is not appropriate. A robust rural infrastructure plan must be part of any new legislation with the necessary funds to address their unique needs.

- **Preserving the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds:** Though legislated as part of the tax code through the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, tax-exempt bonds are a critical tool for counties that facilitate the budgeting and financing of long-range investments in the infrastructure and facilities necessary to meet public demand. Without the tax-exemption, counties would pay more to raise capital, a cost that would ultimately be borne by the taxpayers through means such as reduced spending on the roads and bridges that counties are responsible for, decreased economic development, higher taxes or higher user fees.
- **Promote long-term solvency of the highway trust fund:** In order to maintain a robust infrastructure network, the Highway Trust Fund must remain solvent. NACo advocates for an “all tools in the toolbox” approach to accomplishing this, including increased usage of user-fees for infrastructure.
- **Providing an environment for innovative financing:** NACo supports innovative financing mechanisms including, but not limited to, qualified tax credit bonds; infrastructure banks; the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA); and public-private partnerships that would allow local governments and transportation authorities, such as counties, to leverage federal financing for capital projects.
- **Streamlining of the federal permit process:** NACo supports a streamlining of the federal permitting process, which can help reduce project delays resulting from duplicative reviews and procedures.

KEY TALKING POINTS

- NACo believes that counties should be recognized as major owners of transportation infrastructure in any potential package presented by the administration. **Key funding and financing measures must include all of the following:**
 - Dedicated funding for locally-owned infrastructure.
 - Preservation of tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.
 - Streamlining of the federal permit process.
 - Policies to provide an environment for innovative financing.
 - Bringing long-term certainty and solvency to the federal Highway Trust Fund.

For further information, contact: Jessica Jennings at 202.942.4264 or jjennings@naco.org



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