

Morgan County – Ogden Valley Rural Planning Organization

August 2020 Minutes

Meeting
**RPO August
2020**

Date
August 6, 2020

Time
4:00 – 5:00 pm

Location
**Online Zoom
Meeting**

Julie Bjornstad, Wasatch Front Regional Council transportation planner, called the meeting of the Morgan County – Ogden Valley Rural Planning Organization to order at 4:00 pm. This meeting took place via Zoom.

Policy and Technical Committee	In Attendance
Huntsville	
Mayor Jim Truett	no
Blake Bingham (alternate)	no
Morgan City	
Mayor Ray Little	yes
Ty Bailey	yes
Morgan County	
Councilmember Robert Kilmer	no
Lance Evans	yes
Utah Department of Transportation	
Christopher Chesnut	yes
Utah Transit Authority	
Treva Blaisdell	no
Wasatch Front Regional Council	
Julie Bjornstad	yes
Weber County	
Commissioner Gage Froerer	yes
John Lewis	yes
Brooke Stewart	no

- 1. Welcome [00:00:00]**
Chair Mayor Little welcomed Morgan County-Ogden Valley Rural Planning Organization (RPO) members and technical committee members.
- 2. Approval of the January meeting minutes [00:00:43]**
Chair Mayor Little called for the approval of the January meeting minutes. Commissioner Froerer made the motion to approve and John Lewis seconded. All votes were in favor to approve.
- 3. Opportunity for public comment [00:01:52]**
Vice Chair Mayor Little opened the meeting up for public comment. There were no public comments.

4. **COVID-19 impacts to travel and revenue [00:02:05]**

Julie Bjornstad provided an update to the RPO on how COVID-19 was impacting travel and tax revenue in the area. In summary, people were taking fewer trips and those trips that were made tended to be closer to home.

Traffic volumes on I-15 in Davis and Weber Counties made significant drops in mid-March, corresponding with the Governor's stay-at-home orders and have been increasing as the economy reopens. The percentage of people staying at home peaked in April in both Morgan and Weber Counties. Trips per day also declined and had not reached 2019 levels yet. This reduction in trips resulted in reductions in motor fuel sales of 34 percent in April and 18 percent in May compared to the previous year. This will impact UDOT funding as well as B & C revenues. Year-over-year taxable sales were up nine to 11 percent in the Region in January and February, before essentially breaking even in March and April. May, the last month of available data, had a ten percent increase in sales over 2019. Morgan City and County experienced significant year-over-year increases in taxable sales through February, March, April, and especially May, as residents stayed within the County for essentials. Bicycling usage has also increased in the Region since March, including the RPO area, and has sustained over the past few months, which should be noted as Morgan City and County prepare update master plans. Ty Bailey noted that they had noticed more residents staying within the County to shop and many more people were doing home improvement projects. Commissioner Froerer noted that the increase in taxable sales in Huntsville was likely due to more people recreating near the area's reservoirs. John Lewis noted that Wolf Creek's sales have increased 300 percent over last year and homes sales have had a significant increase as people move from larger cities. He predicts this will impact our demographics and traffic and that these impacts will be felt well into the future.

5. **Local updates [0:24:43]**

Morgan County has recently begun developing a corridor preservation prioritization process. There are currently only two eligible entities, Morgan County and Morgan City, and only a few collectors and arterials that are eligible. The two entities will work together to develop a ten-year project list.

Morgan City also recently imposed a local option sales tax for transportation, making it the first local option sales tax in the County. The City had adopted a resolution in 2019 in support of the County imposing a local option sales tax, which was ultimately not imposed. The new revenue source may be used to bond to finish the Young Street bridge project.

6. **Funding opportunities [00:30:20]**

Christopher Chesnut noted that UDOT's Transportation Investment Fund (TIF), TIF Active Transportation, Transit TIF (TTIF), and TTIF First-Mile/Last-Mile funding will have a call for applications in October 2020. More information about the process can be found online at <https://www.udot.utah.gov/connect/about-us/commission/project-prioritization-process/>.

Julie Bjornstad reviewed additional resources and funding sources: Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative, Safe Routes to School, and Safe Sidewalks. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

created the Applicant Toolkit for the ROUTES Initiative (<https://www.transportation.gov/rural>) because discretionary grant applications can be complex and resource-intensive to complete. Many of FHWA's discretionary grant programs require non-federal funding to cover a portion of project costs, which may present an additional barrier to rural communities with limited funding. The Toolkit provides user-friendly information and resources to enhance rural applicants' familiarity with the Department's discretionary grant programs and the funding process. Specifically, the Toolkit illustrates key applicant requirements when participating in the Department's discretionary grants processes. It also catalogues discretionary grant programs by applicant type and eligible project activities. Additionally, the Toolkit provides resources for applicants to maximize the potential for award success.

Safe Routes to School (<https://saferoutes.utah.gov/resources/>) funds must be spent on improving safety and encouraging students to walk safely to and from school. These funds can be used on any road and are not limited to the state highway system. There is no local match requirement. The program places emphasis on collaboration and public involvement; improving public health and safety; and working with MPOs and City planning departments to fund projects as part of an overall Transportation Master Plan. There's roughly \$1.4 Million available and the program is on a three-year funding cycle. Morgan City received \$100,000 in fiscal year 2019 and will received \$100,000 in fiscal year 2022.

The Safe Sidewalks Program provides a legislative funding source for construction of new sidewalks adjacent to state routes where sidewalks do not currently exist and where major construction or reconstruction of the route, at that location, is not planned for ten or more years. Projects must be adjacent to state highway and have significant pedestrian traffic. There is \$500,000 available. For more information about Safe Routes to School or the Safe Sidewalks Program, contact Travis Evans, UDOT's Active Transportation Safety Program Manager at 801-965-4486.

7. Project updates [00:39:06]

The MCOV RPO Long-Range Plan is available online at: <https://wfrc.org/committees/morgan-county-ogden-valley-rural-planning-organization/>. Wolf Creek has not yet applied for funding for the Fairway Drive connection.

8. Next meeting: October 1, 2020, web-based meeting [00:43:19]

A recording of this meeting may be found on the WFRC website at www.wfrc.org.