



sign-in, 9:00am with the welcoming speaker (not yet assigned). At the last Conference the County Judge was invited but cancelled at the last minute. It can be someone from the County, City, South Central New Mexico. Then from 9:15am to 10:00am we would have the first topic, set up the stage regarding Paratransit services in the region we represent. So, this would be El Paso County, South Central New Mexico. Possible presenters can include Sun Metro, EPATS, South Central Regional Transit District. Then we would proceed into a panel session to further continue the discussion done in the first hour. The panel would last about an hour, with a small break at the end. Then we would go into the lunch hour, we would provide lunch and a final presenter. So, this is just an overview with further details to be ironed out in the next few months.

Mr. Banales commented that he spoke to Ellen Smyth with the City of El Paso who will be supporting the conference with a speaker. She commented to the group that Sun Metro does different things, they can speak regarding the Lyft, streetcar, fixed routes, various grant applications, future of some of the electric vehicles, it all depends on what topics WTEP would like them to cover. She identified Claudia K. Garcia and her team in identifying who and what topics to cover.

Claudia K. Garcia shared that there are broad areas they can speak on.

Mr. Banales mentioned that at the EPATS meeting at which Claudia K. Garcia was there and Anthony Dekeyzer was there as well. Mr. Banales mentioned that we don't have representation at the WTEP meeting. It appeared to him that there was good participation.

Ms. Yvette Lugo mentioned that the meeting focused on public comment regarding the Paratransit Plan for which they had listening meetings for the community, and their plan is for the plan to start in July. They have identified areas for their transportation to be expanded and the collaboration with Sun Metro.

Ms. Claudia K. Garcia mentioned they currently do not provide this service and their plan is to begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Banales then asked South Central Rural Transit District if they provide Paratransit services.

David Armijo replied that they currently do not provide Paratransit services, but they are in the process of putting together a pilot program, a hybrid paratransit on-call service in Sunland Park.

Mr. Banales reported that Amistad also provides paratransit services in El Paso County. He went on to state that Paratransit services may be a good focus for the conference, and that statistics regarding the number of persons served. Mr. Chew is interested in Paratransit services within the persons with disabilities community.

Ms. Ellen Smyth reported that when she began working with Sun Metro four years ago, she was surprised at the cost of paratransit services. She reported that many may not be aware of the cost it carries with needing a call center, dispatchers, fleet, maintenance and repairs, etc.

Mr. Banales reminded the committee members that the audience for the conference is service providers and that in the next few weeks we will begin to put together the list of invites for attendees. Many of them may not understand the cost that is associated with paratransit services and that it is a big undertaking. This would assist those that even write the grants. This will then be worked into the topics that will be presented.

Therefore, the conference will be finalized soon, and detailed information will be sent to the team.

Questions: Ms. Yvette Lugo mentioned that if we look at it from the perspective of providers, access is important. So, information is important that will be relevant to the clients they serve. What message can they carry to their clients? What am I leaving with to make me a better service provider?

Mr. Banales agreed and reported that he recalls with Section 5310 funds when the funding was exhausted Amistad could not provide services, then we had to rely on other available resources within the City and County.

Ms. Claudia K. Garcia then asked regarding the specific details regarding the time frame to set the presentations in place.

Mr. Banales mentioned that we will be setting the presenters and have something more concrete to pursue.

Ms. Ellen Smyth suggested that there only be one break since it is only 3 hours. She mentioned it is hard to break since it is difficult to get people reengaged. That way the presenters utilize every bit of time they are given.

Mr. Banales agreed this was a good plan, to remove the breaks and allow people to use the facilities on their own as needed.

Ms. Claudia K. Garcia reported that she can be the point of contact for Sun Metro, and she will bring the person from the Lyft internally. David Armijo or Tim McDaniel for South Central Rural Transit District. For EPATS Jose Landeros would be a good contact.

Mr. McElhane stated that Jose Landeros would be the right person as he is on the board and has the most institutionalized knowledge. He reported that EPATS is still going through the process of finding an Executive Director, which will take some time, but he reported he would speak to Mr. Jose Landeros.

Mr. Enrique Chew asked if there would be a flyer created with the Conference information and Mr. Banales confirmed that this would be done closer towards the date to be disseminated to potential participants. He reported that Ms. Kristina Pena, Chief Communications Officer, will take the lead in creating the flyer and sending a draft out for review. Yvette Lugo and Ellen Smyth commented that the day after Labor Day would be a good day to send it out as everyone is back to work on that day.

Ms. Yvette Lugo asked what angle we would be taking regarding the perspective of service providers, such as how we support and collaborate with transportation providers.

Mr. Banales commented regarding the history of Regional Planning and explained that the focus would be more for information purposes regarding the importance of collaboration.

Ms. Yvette Lugo continued to comment regarding the potential of extending the initial portion of the presentation since time may be of the essence to highlight the services provided through the Lyft, and other resources to increase knowledge and skill in referring to these services when others struggle due to funding restraints. She commented that it may be a better use of time to extend that portion.

Mr. James Baca commented that there also needs to consideration for delays that happen during these events, and narrowing the focus to Paratransit services in general may be beneficial and the way to go, since it is just three hours, and is going to go quickly.

Mr. Banales replied that this would be considered, and that the Planning Committee would further discuss coming to an agreement and bring it to the team at the next scheduled meeting.

V. Discussion regarding the presentation to County Commissioners regarding the Pollution Study requested by Commissioner Stout

Mr. Banales gave the history regarding the initial request from County Commissioner Stout regarding the pollution study. He reported we are not equipped to provide that information specifically, but since then we have received information from Sun Metro, MPO and TTI. We have looked at the information and would like to present the information to the Commissioners Court, reporting we don't have specific data but want to share the information received from other entities.

Ms. Ellen Smyth jumped in to report that Environmental Services has a contract with TCDQ to monitor air quality through seven air monitoring stations in the City of El Paso which gather data and send it to TCDQ to graph it and model it. They have in the El Paso office downtown, someone that takes the data to show the bearing and air quality, they use it to get the Ozone Action Day. That's how they know the temperature and the PM 2.5 and the PM 10 and the ozone and compliance and non-compliance. All that data comes from the City of El Paso's Air Quality Division, and so if you'd like to connect to them, she can provide the names to start that conversation.

Mr. Banales agreed that would be a great help to get that information and to provide that information to Commissioner Sout.

Mr. McElhane commented that a big part of that is that communities receive funding through the CMAQ program, which is Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality so one of the other places may be Congresswoman Escobar who can provide information from the Federal folks, both EPA and Federal Administration. A call to them may provide good information since they are even more far reaching as a goal. That information, a lot of it is already out there, what Ellen was talking about is more local which is even better, so just a suggestion.

VI. Video regarding WTEP – Updates **(Goal IV - Objective 1)**

Victor Reta from Socorro volunteered for his agency to create a video to promote WTEP. He has done some taking of some individuals, but he has not been available so an update will continue to be tabled until the next meeting.

VII. Status: Revised updated Logo – WTEP name stays the same

- a. Logo mockup will be ready in June 2024, will be presented at the next meeting on July 25, 2024

Mr. Banales updated the committee regarding the revised logo. He reminded the committee that Ms. Kristina Pena, Chief Communications Officer, is taking the lead on this project. She reported that she will be receiving at least 4 different designs of the logo to review that can be shared with the committee. Mr. Banales reported the very first logo was designed around 2005-2006 when the first regional plan was put together. It is time to refresh that, and more information will be presented at the next meeting.

VIII. Status re: implementation of the 2022 - 2026 Regional Plan- Review of the Goals and Objectives

- a. In-depth review of Goals and Objectives scheduled on June 11, 2024, from 9:30am-11:30am

Mr. Banales mentioned the planning beginning for the next Regional Plan. Part of the process is to provide committee members with an in-depth review of every goal and objective in the current regional plan. Those can be found in Chapter 6 of the Regional Plan. We will provide an update with those things that have been accomplished and those that have not been addressed at all. A good review will be presenting with the list of accomplishments. We are also amid the current regional plan to begin the next planning process, which will begin in 2025. At this time, rider surveys will be done in the different areas and agencies that receive transportation services throughout the whole region. Funding has not yet been received, but based on what we know, we will develop a schedule to begin the next phase of the planning process.

IX. Other Business Items

No other business items were reported.

X. Announcements and major events by member agencies **(Goal I – Objective 4)**

Ms. Ellen Smyth reported that the opening for City Manager has been posted if we knew of anyone that would like to apply for the position to go the City Website through ElPasoTX.gov. They would like the person to start in September of 2024.

Ms. Yvette Lugo reported the Aging to Perfection EXPO is scheduled for September 11<sup>th</sup> and we would like to have everyone present. If anyone is interested in having a booth, she can send the form to sign-up. May is also Older Americans Month, so we are celebrating everything that is done in remembrance of Older Adults.

Ms. Kristina Pena reported that collaboration with LULAC Organization and Project Amistad with the ALL OF US Journey campaign, like the 23 & ME, but tied to your health. What it does is it is completely free and provides blood sampling and testing to assist individuals understand their genetic history to see if they have genes that make them predisposed to certain conditions. They will be at Amistad from June 11-14<sup>th</sup>. They provide the blood testing on site, completely private and anyone can do it.

Mr. Banales reported that the project is funded through the National Health Foundation and the goal is to get one million Americans to get involved, reflective of the United States to be able to research and identify predispositions to diseases. They will also provide you with some genetic information for free if you are unable to pay for a 23 & ME.

Mr. Enrique Chew reported they will be celebrating the 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADA at the El Paso Community College on July 22, a Monday. He will send the information; it will be at the building on Viscount.

XI. Next WTEP Meetings

July 25, 2024

September 26, 2024

October 17, 2024 – State of Transportation Conference

XII. Adjourned at 3:50pm.