

SOUTHWEST COLORADO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: Friday, April 15, 2016

Place: Carnegie Building 1188 E 2nd Ave., Durango

Join from PC, Mac, iOS or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/109670693>

Or join by phone: +1 408 638 0968 (US Toll) or +1 646 558 8656 (US Toll), Meeting ID: 109 670 693

Time: 9am to 12:00pm

AGENDA

- 9:00 I. Introductions (additions/changes to agenda)**
- II. Accept Minutes: February 5, 2015***
Accept Financial Report: March 2015*
Chair/Vice Chair Elections*
- 9:10 III. CDOT Reports:**
- 1. CDOT Updates:** Matt Muraro
 - 2. SWP/RTP Lessons Learned:** Michael King
 - 3. CDOT Rural Regional Bus Network:** Michael King
 - 4. Construction Project Update:** Ed Archuleta
- 10:45 IV. Reports**
- 1. STAC updates**
 - a. February & March 2016 meetings:** Kevin Hall
 - 2. TPR Letter of Support for CDOT Region 5 US 550 Corridor:**
Kevin Hall
 - 3. TPR letter of support for the US 160 Passing Lanes North of Towaoc Project for the Federal Lands Access Program:** Matt Muraro
 - 4. Legislation Update:** Jessica Laitsch
 - 5. Transportation Commissioner Report:** Sidney Zink
- 11:45 V. Other Business**
- 1. Transit Provider Updates**
 - 2. Community Updates –Round Robin** (pending available time)
- VII. Adjourn**

Next meeting date: June 3, 2016

**vote requested*

**Southwest Colorado Regional Transportation
Planning Commission
Friday, February 5, 2016 - 9:00 a.m.
Carnegie Building 1188 E 2nd Ave., Durango**

TPR Members in Attendance:

Keenan Ertel – Montezuma County
Chris La May – Town of Bayfield
Kevin Hall - City of Durango
James Lambert - Montezuma County
John Egan - Town of Pagosa Springs
Bentley Henderson – Archuleta County
Clifford Lucero - Archuleta County
Edward Box III - Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jacob Garlick - Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Greg Schulte - Town of Pagosa Springs
Brad Blake – La Plata County
Andrea Phillips – Town of Mancos
Ernie Williams – Dolores County

Others in Attendance:

Sidny Zink - Transportation Commissioner
April Toledo – Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Jim Davis – La Plata County
Peter Tregillus - SUCAP/Roadrunner Transit
Scott Lewandowski – Town of Pagosa Springs
Kerrie Neet - Colorado Department of Transportation
Michael King - Colorado Department of Transportation
Mike McVaugh - Colorado Department of Transportation
Matt Muraro – Colorado Department of Transportation
Jeff Medenwaldt - Colorado Department of Transportation
Ed Archuleta – Colorado Department of Transportation
Nancy Shanks – Colorado Department of Transportation
Matt Muraro - Colorado Department of Transportation
Miriam Gillow-Wiles – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Sara Trujillo – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Shannon Cramer - Southwest Colorado Council of Governments
Jessica Laitsch - Southwest Colorado Council of Governments

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

I. Introductions

Kevin Hall mentioned that the chair and vice chair must be selected for the year and asked whether the commission would prefer to make the selection today or add it to the agenda in

April. He added that he would be happy to remain serving as chair. The consensus was to add this item to the agenda in April.

II. Accept Minutes: December 2015

Chris La May motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Clifford Lucero seconded, unanimously approved.

Accept Financial Report: December 2015

Chris La May motioned to accept the financial report as presented, John Egan seconded, unanimously approved.

III. Legislation

1. HB16-XXX Tribe Voting at STAC legislation and Letter of Support; Letter of Support will require a vote*

Kevin reported that the draft legislation has been prepared to provide voting rights at the STAC for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. Miriam Gillow-Wiles mentioned that the bill has been introduced and she is scheduled to meet with Representative Coram and Representative Brown to discuss this legislation. Bentley Henderson suggested modifying the letter of support to the state that the TPR very strongly supports this legislation.

Bentley Henderson motioned to support the letter with the modification as detailed above, Chris La May seconded, unanimously approved.

Kevin asked where this letter would be sent. Miriam replied that the letter, along with the Ute Mountain Ute resolution and Southern Ute letter of support, would be sent to the representatives and senator for the region. She added that the SWCCOG may decide to support this. She added that neither the Denver Regional nor the Pikes Peak Area COGs intend to oppose this legislation.

2. HB16-1018 STAC to provide advice to Transportation Commission

Kevin mentioned that there has not been opposition to this bill at the STAC and believes it is valuable and important that we have additional membership to represent this region and that the committee provide direct recommendations to the TC.

3. HB16-1031 Study to modify the membership of the Transportation Commission

Kevin explained that the original intent was to better integrate the TC boundaries with the TPR boundaries, although this legislation is simply evaluating whether changes should be considered. Sidney stated that the TC is not opposed and that looking at the boundaries prior to making changes is best. Kevin asked about the current status of these bills. Miriam replied that HB 16-1018 has gone through the 3rd reading, but there has been no movement in the last couple days.

4. SB16-011 Changes to FASTER Registration Fees

Kevin explained that this has potentially significant impacts, but is not expected to move forward. Matt Muraro described that this proposes to take the \$15 million in FASTER funding from transit and move it to road safety and maintenance. He added that this would effectively eliminate CDOT's transit division including the Bustang service. He added that CDOT, CCI, CML all have opposed this legislation. The expectation is that this could pass the senate but not

the house. Miriam confirmed that this is her understanding as well, however it will be important to watch. John Egan asked whether the TPR should take a position. Miriam replied that the SWCCOG will have talking points in the event this bill gains momentum. Miriam and Matt explained that \$5 million goes to local government grants for projects like equipment replacement while \$10 million goes to statewide projects. This would negatively impact the state's ability to receive federal transit funding as the FASTER funds can be used as match. Peter Tregillus mentioned that SUCAP needs to replace the coaches for the Grand Junction route and without FASTER funding he is concerned about the viability of that route.

IV. Reports

1. STAC update

a. December meeting: Bentley Henderson

- Significant efforts have been made on the I-70E high performance transportation enterprise route and is moving forward.
- Bustang has been well received and they are looking at new buses, however the service would suffer if FASTER funding is cut.
- Shoulder improvements were made east of Idaho Springs as well as shoulder allowances for buses on US 36. The use of shoulders as lanes is gaining traction.
- The state is seeing issues with park-n-rides used as parking lots rather than for riding a bus.
- There was information presented from the Division of Transportation Development and Policy and Government Relations regarding the transportation bill.

b. January meeting: Kevin Hall

- A majority of the discussion related to legislative items.
- The Freight Advisory Committee is looking at further inclusion of industry rather than so much focus on government.
- There was an update on SB 228 and the funding forecast looks better than previously estimated.
- Michelle Scheuerman had presented lessons learned on the regional transportation planning process and is seeking feedback on the process.
- The Federal Lands Access Program was discussed. Matt mentioned that he would address this later in the meeting.
- The Bustang westbound service is very popular and the other routes slowly picking up.

2. Transportation Commissioner Report: Sidney Zink

- Sidney reported there was discussion looking at a new policy on FASTER funds and how they are spent prompted by an unfavorable report from state audit office on the how they were spent in the beginning. Her opinion is that the written policies were cleaned up will be put in place and opined that there was not actual mismanagement.
- Legislators overwhelmingly agree that transportation and education are most important issues but funding is a constant struggle. She mentioned the importance of

providing feedback on how limited funds should be spent and what the actual impacts are. She stressed the importance of using caution with the language used when discussing issues with legislators.

- The peak period passing lanes have been very successful.
- The Federal FAST Act legislation will likely be a major agenda topic at the next meeting.

IV. CDOT Report:

3. Construction Project Update: Ed Archuleta

- US 160 Wilson Gulch Road Extension – Kevin reported that this project is currently on hold. There is concrete work expected to be completed in the spring.
- US 160 W. Wildlife Crossing at Dry Creek – Ed reported that this project is shut down for the winter. The exhibit will be emailed out.
- FY 15 Priority Culverts, SH 141 – This project is under construction. There are some environmental constraints as well as significant bid savings.
- US 550 Cribwalls Phase II/III Project – This is the project just this side of San Juan County and is an extensive reconstruction with delays, although hopefully the road won't be closed.
- SH 172/151 Signalization – This is the RAMP project with the Southern Ute Tribe, La Plata County and the Town of Ignacio. The goal is to have this completed by Labor Day.
- SH 145 Chipseal West Fork North – The bids for this project were coming in significantly under budget. Chris asked about double chip seal. Ed replied that double chip seal has larger aggregate on the bottom and finer aggregate on the top, this tends to result in a smoother surface. Ernie Williams mentioned that since oil prices are low it seems reasonable that bids are lower and asked what happens if prices go up. Ed replied that they include contingencies to allow for some cost adjustment. Mike McVaugh added that costs are balanced such that if the cost of oil goes down the contractor pays CDOT the difference while if the cost of oil goes up CDOT pays the contractor the difference.
- R5 US 24, SH 17, US 160 Priority Culverts – This project is out to ad and planned for fall construction.
- SH 145 North of Rico – There were low bids received for this project as well.
- US 491 Cortez to MCR 30 (CR M) – This project was advertised in November and the costs came in too high so they will be re-advertising later in February. The project will consist of concrete in town, intersection work, lighting, and ADA ramps.
- US 160 Mesa Verde Bridge Coating – This project includes painting and preventative maintenance and will require lane reductions during construction.
- US 550 Cribwall Repair MP 68.7 and 88.76 – This project is to address failing cribwalls and will go out for bid in the spring with construction in December. Kerrie asked for clarification where this is. Ed replied that this is right above Silverton.
- SH 184 Narraguinnep Canal 0-02-A Structure – This project will go to ad in the summer for construction in the fall and winter after irrigation season. Nancy asked if this would be a full road closure. Ed replied that it would be. Kevin asked when it

would be closed. Ed replied that the expectation is November or December. Mike mentioned that they would try to do this after irrigation season. Keenan Ertel mentioned that irrigation season typically ends in mid-October.

- US 550 Durango Sidewalk Ramps MP 21-24 – CDOT is managing the survey and design, and the City of Durango is doing the right-of-way title research. CDOT will purchase temporary easements and the city will do the construction.
- US 160 McCabe Creek Pagosa – This bridge is expected to cost more than \$9 million. The project will go to ad in September with construction in 2017.
- US 550/160 PCCP Diamond Grinding Phase I – This is concrete grinding for Durango from US 550 to 17th Street. Future phases will continue north. Mike added that the intent is to micro surface the entire road and remark the lanes without leaving scar.
- SH 41 Surface Treatment US 160 to Utah – This is a surface treatment from the Utah state line to US 160 on Ute Mountain Ute land. This will go to ad next year.
- US 550 San Juan Line to Coal Bank Pass– This project is possible due to bid savings and will go from Cascade to the summit of Coal Bank. This will go to ad later in February with construction after Memorial Day.
- One other project on US 160 going into Pagosa Springs will be an open trench cut culvert replacement. The timeframe will be in the summer.
- There are three projects from Lebanon Road to Cahone, the first will be advertised next year with all three expected to be completed by 2019.
- Mike reported that the US 160 signal optimization project will go to as in February. This project will involve modifications at signalized intersections along US 160 through Cortez, Mancos, Bayfield, Pagosa Springs and Alamosa. The modifications in Pagosa Springs will include re-striping and lane changes. The plan is to have the changes in Pagosa Springs completed by Memorial Day.
- There is a resurfacing project from the tunnel to the summit of Wolf Creek Pass. Also on Wolf Creek Pass they will be laying fiber under the road to the tunnel.
- Capital signal replacement program which will include replacements at Hot Springs Boulevard, Pinion Causeway, and 22nd and 32nd streets. The replacement list will shift as signals are replaced, there are a number of factors considered when determining priority. Bentley asked for clarification that the fiber will go from South Fork to the tunnel. Mike replied yes, and that there is currently fiber from Walsenburg nearly to South Fork and from the tunnel to the ski area, but not beyond that. Miriam mentioned that the SWCCOG is working on a broadband planning grant and the project will include gaps like this. Kevin asked how information on this is disseminated to the public. Mike replied that once a project is awarded the public is notified. Nancy reported that CDOT has a comprehensive list of local entities and a significant number of people are signed up to receive notifications. She added that the difficulty with a project like this is getting information to people travelling through as opposed to local commuters. Mike mentioned that he is developing agreements with a couple of freight haulers to allow them to receive live updates from COTrip to assist with scheduling routes and suggested that this could be done with virtually any agency. Bentley asked how far in advance they begin using variable message

boards. Mike replied they would likely place them in Pagosa Springs. Bentley asked what approximate time frame. Mike replied generally several weeks ahead of the project.

1. CDOT Updates

a. State Senate Bill regarding FASTER funds

Matt asked if there are any additional questions.

b. FAST Act Legislation

Matt stated that there is not much new information. He summarized that the bill creates a new national freight program that will distribute funds by formula, creates a new discretionary program for nationally significant freight and highway projects, provides modest increases for inflation for surface treatment programs and transit, increases Colorado's highway formula funding by 5% initially then by 15% by 2020, and modifies the TAP program to become a block grant program. He mentioned that the Freight Advisory Committee is a diverse group that should be well positioned to take advantage of some of these opportunities. He added that this will create a national freight network. He added that CDOT will be compiling feedback to identify the highest priorities for use by the STAC. Kevin suggested providing input by email as he would like feedback to bring to STAC. Andrea asked for clarification on what they are seeking feedback about. Kevin replied that this is to identify the highest priorities for when STAC is being updated on the bill. Matt stated that he would send out the summary.

c. CDOT Project Development List

Matt explained that this is a compilation of prioritized projects and is the result of discussions identifying the need for a comprehensive statewide list that can be sorted and prioritized as necessary for various issues. The intent is to include major projects, currently the list includes approximately \$8 billion statewide; however the Transportation Commission will develop criteria to narrow the list down. He reiterated that the intent is to have a living database that can be modified as necessary. Kevin asked what types of projects are not included. Matt replied that any major projects are currently included. Michael King added that the intent is to track major projects that do not have funding in the event funding becomes available. Kerrie mentioned that, for context, CDOT's annual budget is \$1.2 billion. Matt mentioned that he will work to keep the southwest region's prioritized projects on the list. Andrea asked if the list could be sent out. Matt replied that he would send out.

d. Local Funding Opportunities

Matt reported that the Federal Lands Access Program application process will begin on February 15. He explained that in the past CDOT has submitted regional applications, this time they will submit a few applications and local agencies are encouraged to submit their own. The funding is for 3 years and there is \$16.6 million available with a 17% match. One change this year is encouraging that projects have a more thorough NEPA analysis done. Overmatch and partnerships are encouraged, and the focus is on areas with high population or high visitor numbers that access federal lands. Chris La May asked if maintenance is eligible. Matt replied it is. Greg asked if the \$16 million is national or for Colorado. Matt replied this is specifically for

Colorado. He added that there are expected to be a large number of applications submitted. Greg asked about the statewide applications. Matt replied that CDOT will submit 3 or 4 applications rather than each region submitting applications. Greg asked who makes the award decisions. Matt replied there is a three member committee comprised of a STAC member, a CDOT employee and a representative of Central Federal Lands and the applications are vetted by representatives of Central Federal Lands. Greg asked if the same group will review and prioritize the CDOT projects. Matt replied that CDOT has its own process to prioritize projects. He added that the local projects will compete against the CDOT projects. Kevin asked what projects from the southwest region would be considered. Matt replied that the Towaoc passing lanes have remained a high priority in the previous cycles. Brad Blake asked what portion of the CDOT project development list is for the southwest region and how often projects could be added. Matt replied that he does not know the proportion of local projects, but the list will be narrowed down significantly anyway. Kevin asked about the process to include new projects. Matt replied that the planning process will be readdressed every four years and this is intended to be a living document to be changed as needed. Kevin asked whether the development list would supersede the annual planning and prioritization process. Mike mentioned that he would expect the two to overlap. Michael added that the list should be regularly reviewed to ensure the top priorities are represented.

Matt reported that the Transportation Alternatives Program has been stalled slightly and they will be adjusting the application process slightly. There will be a 20% match required and there will be \$585,000 available for the region. He reported that the tentative award list for FASTER capital projects has been sent out and may be revised. The Safe Routes to School awards will be out in mid-March.

2. Budget 101: Michael King

Michael presented an overview of the CDOT budget process. Kennan asked how much longer the debt service would last. Sidney replied there is another year. Keenan asked how much money that will free up. Sidney replied approximately \$167 million and this would go to asset management. Kennan asked if this money could be leveraged. Bentley replied that there had been discussion about leveraging on the front end. Kevin added that opinions had been diverse on this. Kerrie mentioned that everyone agrees that transportation is a problem. Andrea asked how funds are allocated on regional basis. Matt replied that there are a number of funding pools, each asset management area is allocated based on a number of factors including specific needs, population, and vehicle miles. Kerrie added that the southwest region typically receives approximately 7-8%. Mike added that CDOT looks at the projects recommended years out to strategize how best to prioritize ongoing maintenance. Andrea asked if remaining funds can be kept in the region. Kerrie replied that it depends on the funding source. Mike elaborated that if there are bid savings on assets, savings are returned to fund additional assets. There was additional discussion on specific funding sources and how savings are managed. Sidney pointed out that the state and federal fiscal years are different in addition to other financial complications. Kerrie added that transportation is underfunded and the key message, considering that government is often perceived to be inefficient, is to make clear that the money spent on actual construction has doubled in the past few years. Mike added that this has

increased because they have changed how they budget, rather than holding on to money it is provided as needed. Matt added that they are trying to find the right balance for the cash reserve. Kerrie suggested that CDOT can make the argument that they have become more efficient. Keenan mentioned the change to hospital provider fees as not to be applicable under TABOR and whether road fees could be changed the same way. Sidney replied that FASTER was originally set up that way. There was general discussion about concerns related to TABOR and pending ballot issues to adjust TABOR.

Michael provided a brief overview of how CDOT will compile lessons learned from the statewide planning process.

V. Other Business

1. Transit Provider Updates:

Peter Tregillus reported that a SUCAP Roadrunner bus was hit and is expected to be repaired soon. He mentioned that last year they spent \$140,000 to maintain two vehicles since they had purchased older buses, though they intent to purchase smaller, newer vehicles in the future. He mentioned that CODT's roadshow regarding the regional transportation plan is expected to happen in the spring. John Egan asked what size vehicles they intend to move to. Peter replied probably 35-40 passenger. Brad asked if the annual maintenance figure includes fuel. Peter replied that is only for maintenance, however they did save money on fuel due to the price being down. Brad asked about the cost for a new vehicle. Peter replied that a new vehicle would probably range from \$400,000-\$700,000; another option would be leasing vehicles from CDOT.

Kevin reported that the City of Durango's primary concern is how to pay for the transit system as it is not self-sustaining and they will be looking at options. He added that the service is very popular. Peter mentioned that the SWCCOG hosted a training on Medicaid billing which could open opportunities for the city. Matt added that the city will be hosting meetings to discuss an update to the multimodal transportation plan.

2. Community Updates – Round Robin

Andrea Phillips:

The Town of Mancos is working with CDOT on the US 160 Corridor project to ensure the proposed access points are acceptable. Construction for the pedestrian crossing will hopefully begin this year, they are wrapping up the design. The main street bridge is on the list for off-system bridge funding, design is expected in 2017 with construction in 2018 or 2019. The Path to Mesa Verde Trail was identified as one of the Colorado the Beautiful Initiative projects. This project is a 17 mile multi-use path connecting Mancos, Mesa Verde and Cortez. Kevin asked what next steps would be. Andrea replied they need to get out to RFP for the planning phase. There was discussion about the status and plan for this project.

John Egan:

The Town of Pagosa Springs approved a section of trail from the elementary to the high school as part of safe routes to school.

Greg Schulte:

The town council approved a partnership to develop dirt paths in an urbanized which is an up and coming type of infrastructure. The town will be working on south 8th Street from the highway to the high school. They are partnering with Archuleta County on resurfacing CR 500. The town council may consider another bridge at 5th Street which would open up 27 acres in the downtown area for development. They are planning more sidewalk work on US 160. He recommended that CDOT speak with the Pagosa Springs Chamber of Commerce about the controls on Wolf Creek for the summer. Nancy agreed that this should be done sooner than later. Mike mentioned that approximately 6 miles will need to be in the road, after that the fiber can be laid in the shoulder. He also clarified that the road would not be closed, rather there will be alternating lanes during the week. Kerrie suggested making sure people know it is not a full closure. Brad asked if they will be laying conduit. Mike replied they will be partnering with San Luis Valley Rural Electric to lay power lines in addition to fiber conduit.

Chris La May:

Chris recommended remaining cognizant of interstate issues with respect to freight. Michael replied that the Freight Advisory Committee intends to host regional meetings and will be looking for input on regional issues.

Kevin Hall:

The City of Durango is moving forward on the La Plata County transportation demand model with its partners. They are also working to get the trail project in Grandview out to bid.

Nancy Shanks:

Nancy reported that CDOT's 2015 annual report is available online. She also reported that she will be retiring in the spring.

Kevin thanked Kerrie and Nancy for their work through the years. Miriam presented Kerrie with a going away and thank you gift. Kerrie commended and thanked the TPR group.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Southwest Colorado Council of Governments

Profit & Loss

03/30/16

January through March 2016

Accrual Basis

	<u>Jan - Mar 16</u>
Income	
Dues Revenue	
SWTPR Dues	7,679.00
Total Dues Revenue	7,679.00
SWTPR CDOT Grant	9,050.50
Total Income	16,729.50
Gross Profit	16,729.50
Expense	
Advertising and Promotion	10.49
Employee/Board Appreciation	104.03
Insurance Expense	
General Liability	262.75
Worker's Compensation	209.25
Total Insurance Expense	472.00
Internet Connectivity	
Software	250.00
Internet Connectivity - Other	32.14
Total Internet Connectivity	282.14
Meetings	177.01
Office Equipment	800.00
Office Supplies	170.59
Professional Fees	
Audit Fees	74.07
Professional Fees - Other	12.12
Total Professional Fees	86.19
Salary and Wages	1,854.15
Travel Expense	3,175.67
Total Expense	7,132.27
Net Income	9,597.23



SOUTHWEST TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGION

12 April 2016

Mike McVaugh
Colorado Department of Transportation
Region 5, Regional Transportation Director
3803 N. Main Avenue
Suite 306
Durango, CO 81301

Dear Mr. McVaugh,

The Southwest Transportation Planning Region (SWTPR) has received your request for a support letter regarding a FASTLANE grant application prepared by CDOT Region 5 that would request significant funding to assist in the continued improvement to U.S. Highway 550 between the New Mexico State Line and U.S. Hwy 160 in Durango. While the SWTPR has not had the opportunity to meet as a group to discuss this request, improvement of U.S. Highway 550 is identified as a priority in the Regional and State Transportation Plan, and as such, the SWTPR is supportive of Region 5's effort to find funding for this priority project.

US 550 is the transportation backbone for north-south travel in Western Colorado. The highway runs from I-25 in Albuquerque north to Montrose, Colorado; spanning about 320 miles across the two states. US 550 carries much of the goods and services into the SWTPR region. Over ten percent of the traffic on the roadway is trucks, including heavy and oversized equipment, freight, and agricultural loads. Further, the highway is the critical to more than 20,000 natural gas and oil wells in the San Juan Basin. The equipment used to develop and operate the oil and gas wells, which provide energy for the nation, takes a large toll on the highway. The impact of a semi-trailer truck is 15,000 to 46,000 times that of a passenger vehicle; many of these are oversized loads and create additional safety issues on an already narrow roadway. To develop just a single well, it takes an average of 2,000 vehicle trips, including 750 heavy truck trips.

The area proposed for improvements is currently a narrow two lane highway with minimal to no shoulders. The improvements would be aimed at improving safety for all road users, including cyclists, passenger vehicles, and trucks. Improvements necessary for increasing safety are intersection development, shoulder widening, wildlife mitigation, and pavement improvements. Collisions involving animals and vehicles comprise between 30 and 50 percent of the accidents in the project area. Improvement to the highway will also lower response times for first responders.

In light of the importance of US Highway 550 to the Region and State, the Southwest Transportation Region fully supports CDOT Region 5's request.

Sincerely,

Kevin Hall
Southwest Transportation Planning Region Chair

Legislative Update

To: Southwest Transportation Planning Commission
From: Jessica Laitsch, SWCCOG
Date: 15 April, 2016

Comments: Below is the status of the following bills as of April 8, 2016:

SB16-011 – Terminate the use FASTER fees for transit:
Postponed indefinitely in House committee

HB16-1018 – Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee Procedures:
Signed by Governor

HB16-1031 – Modify Transportation Commission Membership (authorization of a study):
Referred amended from House Committee on Transportation and Energy to House Committee on Appropriations.

HB16-1169 – Allow Tribes to Vote at Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee:
Ute Mountain Ute Councilwoman Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk and SWCCOG Executive Director Miriam Gillow-Wiles testified to the Senate Committee on Transportation on March 22. Sent unamended to the Governor.

Regional Transit Update

To: SW Colorado Regional Transportation Planning Commission
From: Jessica Laitsch
Date: 15 April 2016

Comments: The Southwest Transit Coordinating Council met on Friday, March 18. This happened:

- Review of March 9, 2016 CDOT Town Hall meeting, which included updates from the Transit and Rail Division and an introduction to a proposal to modify the process for the distribution of Federal Transit Administration 5310 and 5311 funds. CDOT will be seeking feedback on these policy updates through the summer.
- DOLA grant funding for marketing transit services in the region. There will be continued discussion related to how the Council would like to move forward with marketing.
- Modifications to the draft by-laws which are being developed to create structure and unity to the council.

The next Transit Council meeting will be held Friday, May 20, 2016 at 9 a.m. at the Carnegie Building.

SUCAP – Road Runner Update

April 7, 2016

Transit director search

Peter Tregillus has been serving as acting transit director in the wake of the death of former director Clayton Richter in February.

The SUCAP search committee reopened the position to get more applicants. Interviews are now being scheduled.

Road Runner Transit: Fixed routes

Ignacio-Durango	Trips up 21% since January, up 16% since 2015
Ignacio-Aztec	Trips up 28% since January, but down 17% since 2015
Bayfield-Durango	Trips up 13.9% since January, up 16% since 2015

SUCAP will replace two buses in 2016 with federal, state (FASTER) and local funds.

Road Runner Transit: Ignacio Area Dial-a-Ride

Ridership is up slightly since January, but down 35% overall since 2015.

NOTE: Road Runner, like transit systems across the country, have seen ridership decline along with gas prices.

Road Runner Stage Lines: Inter-city Bus

Boardings for the first quarter of 2016 are up 40% over the same period last year.

Jan-March, 2015	1,003
Jan-March, 2016	1,403

Equipment has been the most significant challenge. One of the coaches was rear ended in January. As a consequence RRSL did not operate 10 days this quarter. During February, SUCAP leased vans when both buses were in the shop. This option is not available at present because the rental vans have all been recalled.





Rockfall

The climate and topography of our state present some unique and harsh challenges to our ability as the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to keep our roads open and safe for travel. These challenges also present a real financial situation for us to deal with. On Monday morning, February



Massive scope of the Glenwood Rockfall event

16, at about 2:30am, a large rockfall occurred on I-70 in Glenwood Canyon. CDOT crews were able to flag people through the canyon on Monday until a second rockfall just west of Hanging Lake Tunnel occurred that night, at 9:03pm. For the safety of the traveling public we closed the interstate that night, necessitating a 5 hour detour for interstate traffic. Thirty cubic yards of rock came down on the initial slides (approximately three large tandem dump trucks of material). The largest single rock was the size of an SUV. CDOT has since brought down another 160 cubic yards of rock (another 16 dump trucks of material) in an effort to stabilize the area.

The detour and closures resulted in significant economic impact and enormous inconvenience to the public. It is estimated that this event, including cleanup and stabilization, will cost up to \$5 million. CDOT fronts that money, and over time will be reimbursed with federal emergency funds, much like we have done with other incidents, like the 2013 floods.

CDOT's geohazards budget includes things like rockfalls, sinkholes and landslides and is \$9.2 million for FY 2016 for the entire program. That \$9.2 million geohazard budget is used to help manage 1,500 recognized geological hazards around the state, including 760 rockfall sites. The funds are only enough to manage 3 to 5 small to medium sites or 1 to 2 large sites each year. Five years ago our rockfall budget was only \$4 million. Thanks to the Transportation Commission (TC) prioritizing the rockfall program, and better management of our cash balance with the RAMP program (Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships), CDOT has increased funding over the last few years for rockfall in addition to our other asset programs like surface treatment, traffic signals, tunnels and culverts.



recent Glenwood Rockfall

TIGER 2016

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has announced \$500 million will be made available for transportation projects across the country under an eighth round of Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program. Like the first seven rounds, FY 2016 TIGER discretionary grants will fund capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure and will be awarded on a competitive basis for projects that will have a significant impact on the nation, a metropolitan area, or a region. *continued on page 2*

FAST Act Focus

This month we wrap up our series on the latest long term Federal Transportation Authorization the FAST Act (short for Fixing America's Surface Transportation). In this issue we will take a closer look at the Planning and Environmental provisions. The FAST Act makes no significant changes to the performance-based planning and programming policy requirements included in the last federal authorization known as MAP-21. The Act does change a "should" to a "shall" regarding the inclusion of performance measures and the system performance report in a State's long-range transportation plan. The FAST Act includes new provisions to better support State DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) in the collection and management of data for performance-based planning and programming. This includes data analysis related to household travel behavior, travel demand models and performance management prediction tools.

The Act includes new Metropolitan and Statewide Planning requirements to encourage consultation with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area, including tourism and natural disaster risk reduction. ...continued on page 3.



U.S. Department of Transportation Offices in D.C.

TIGER *...continued from page 1*

There is a strong focus on what the USDOT describes as ladders of opportunity projects. This focus area looks to increase connectivity to employment, education, services and other opportunities that support workforce development or contribute to community revitalization. Those projects should also be geared toward particularly disadvantaged groups including low income groups, persons with visible and hidden disabilities, elderly individuals, and minority persons and populations.

TIGER Facts

- Funds must be obligated by September 30th, 2019.
- Minimum project cost is \$5M.
- Deadline for submission is April 29th, 2016.

At least 20% of the funds provided (or at least \$100M) must be used for projects located in rural areas. Grants may be used for up to 80% of the costs of a project located in an urban area and up to 100% of the costs of a project located in a rural area.

Unlike last year, there's no set-aside for pre-construction or planning activities. Pre-construction must be part of an overall project that fits the TIGER guidelines. Primary Selection Criteria includes Safety, State of Good Repair, Economic Competitiveness, Quality of Life, and Environmental Sustainability. Secondary Selection Criteria includes Innovation, Partnership, and Disciplinary Integration. Each project must demonstrate project readiness evidenced by Technical Feasibility, Financial Feasibility, Project Schedule, Required Approvals, and Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies. For more information on TIGER, contact Aaron Greco, CDOT Local Liaison at Aaron.greco@state.co.us.

FASTLANE Grants

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced that it is now soliciting applications for the Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant program. The FASTLANE program is a new program in the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act to fund critical freight and highway projects across the country. The FAST Act authorizes \$800 million in funding for the FASTLANE program for fiscal year 2016, with 25 percent reserved for rural projects, and 10 percent for smaller projects.

FASTLANE

- Applications due April 14th, 2016
- Minimum project size \$100M
(10% reserved for small projects)
- Minimum grant
\$25M for large projects
\$5M for small projects

The FASTLANE grant program provides funding for projects of national or regional significance. The program is designed to provide dedicated funding for projects that address major issues facing our nation's highways and bridges. For the first time in the U.S. Department of Transportation's 50-year history, the program establishes broad, multiyear eligibilities for freight infrastructure, including intermodal projects.

Eligible Projects include freight projects carried out on the National Highway Freight Network; highway or bridge projects carried out on the National Highway System including projects that add capacity on the Interstate System. Projects should improve mobility or be located in a national scenic area. Potential projects also include railway-highway grade crossing or grade separation projects; or a freight project that is 1) an intermodal or rail project, or 2) within the boundaries of a public or private freight rail, or intermodal facility. For more information on the FAST Act or other Federal matters, contact CDOT Federal Liaison Ron Papsdorf at Ron.papsdorf@state.co.us.

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Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Plans are also now required to consider strategies to improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation as well as enhance travel and tourism.

The project delivery provisions in the FAST Act contain many important streamlining measures. FAST allows states to assume federal responsibility for project design, plans, specifications, estimates, contract awards and inspection of projects, to the maximum extent practicable. The Act also allows USDOT operating administrations to adopt the NEPA environmental documents and assessments developed by other operating administrations. It expands the multimodal Categorical Exclusion (CE) established in MAP-21 to provide the authority for any DOT operating administration to use a CE of another operating administration.

For more information on the FAST Act or other Federal matters, contact CDOT Federal Liaison Ron Papsdorf at Ron.papsdorf@state.co.us.



228 Funding

Budget discussions at the General Assembly the last week of March highlighted the complexity of the ongoing conversation about how to provide certainty in funding transportation in the Colorado legislature. In 2009 the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 09-228 this bill repealed transportation funding measures known as Senate Bill 97-1 "diversions" and House Bill 02-1310 "transfers", and established alternative transfers from the General Fund (subject to triggers) to transportation, Capital Construction Fund (CCF), and the General Fund statutory reserve.

SB 09-228 required transfers from the General Fund to the HUTF and CCF if certain conditions were met. The transfers were required in the five years following the calendar year that Colorado personal income grew by 5.0 percent. Colorado personal income grew 6.2 percent in 2014 triggering the first transfers in FY 2015-16.

Under current law, the size of Senate Bill 09-228 transfers are partially determined by the size of the TABOR (Tax Payer Bill of Rights) refund as a percent of General Fund revenue collections. On the recommendation of the Joint Budget Committee, House Bill 16-1416 titled State Infrastructure General Fund Transfers was introduced. This bill replaces the SB 09-228 transfers from the General Fund to the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) and the Capital Construction Fund (CCF) with actual dollar amounts. The measure ensures a full transfer of SB 09-228 funds (\$199.2M) for this fiscal year to the HUTF, and a 75% transfer (\$158M) for the following fiscal year. The remaining three years stay the same with the TABOR triggers and forecast requirements for SB09-228 in place. The bill would send the CCF \$49.8M in FY 2015-16 and \$52.7 million in FY 2016-17.



Colorado Senate Chamber

As we enter the month of April the Senate will take up budget and related spending bills. Check back next month as Interchange brings you an update on the ongoing challenges of transportation funding in Colorado. For the latest weekly CDOT Legislative memo visit our website by clicking [here](#) or contact Andy Karsian, CDOT's Legislative Liaison at (303) 757-9703.

Driven to Distraction

It only takes a second to be distracted enough for a driver to cause an accident on the road. Last year alone an estimated 15,307 distracted driving crashes occurred in Colorado, a number that has grown by 16 percent in the last four years. More than 50 percent of Colorado's distracted driving crashes from 2012 to 2015 occurred in Denver, Jefferson, Arapahoe and Adams counties.

With these troubling statistics in mind, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Colorado State Patrol (CSP) are joining a national effort in recognizing April as National Distracted Driving Awareness Month by declaring distracted driving a significant threat to traffic safety in Colorado.

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Driven to Distraction

In conjunction with National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, CDOT is partnering with CSP to conduct a high-visibility distracted driving enforcement period. Beginning Friday, April 8, and running through Sunday, April 10, state troopers will increase patrols, specifically looking for drivers who are distracted.

CDOT is asking Facebook users to submit their own anti-distracted driving messages for possible use on highway message signs throughout the state. The winning messages may be displayed on highway signs in April. This summer, CDOT will launch a statewide, high-visibility awareness campaign to decrease distracted driving. For more information about distracted driving in Colorado, visit codot.gov/safety/distracteddriving.

Express Yourself

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) celebrated the end of construction of the North I-25 Express Lanes with a ribbon-cutting ceremony near 104th Avenue on April 4th. The ceremony commemorated the local, state and federal collaboration that went into the construction and delivery of the North I-25 Express Lanes between US 36 and 120th Avenue. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Administrator Gregory Nadeau, Senator Cory Gardner and Congressman Ed Perlmutter joined local elected officials -- Adams County Commissioner Steve O'Dorisio and Thornton Mayor Heidi Williams and representatives from CDOT and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) in the celebration.



The North I-25 Express Lanes is just one of the operational improvements that CDOT and the High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) have opened recently in Colorado. Since last summer, CDOT

"Express Lanes can deliver more consistent, faster speeds and reduced travel times for all corridor users, including the general purpose lanes. Since testing began earlier this month, commuters are already noticing positive changes in traffic congestion, as travel times for this critical corridor have been reduced."

Shailen Bhatt, CDOT Executive Director at I-25 North Ribbon Cutting

opened Express Lanes to provide reliable travel times on US 36, the I-70 Mountain corridor and on North I-25. Express Lanes offers travelers choices such as biking, carpooling, transit and toll-paying options.

About Express Lanes: Express Lanes increase roadway capacity and help to manage congestion on the highways. The use of toll pricing during peak travel times reduces delays, manages congestion and maintains reliable travel times. For more information, visit expresslanes.codot.gov. To get an Express-Toll account and pass, [visit www.expresstoll.com](http://www.expresstoll.com).

About the High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE): The HPTE operates as a government-owned, independent business within CDOT. It searches out innovative ways to finance projects to help Colorado fulfill its commitment to increase travel choices through options that include Express Lanes, transit, biking, walking and carpooling. For more information, visit www.coloradohpte.com.