

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

JUNE 23, 2022

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, June 23, 2022, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Dennis Flores, PACOG Treasurer, at 12:18 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Chris DeLuca
Dennis Flores
Heather Graham
Epimenio Griego
Ed Gutierrez

Harry Hochstetler
Regina Maestri
Vicente Martinez Ortega
Garrison Ortiz

Those members absent were:

Larry Atencio
Mike Cafasso
Barbara Clementi
Sarah Martinez

Doug Proal
Lori Winner
Chris Wiseman

Also present were:

John Adams
Eva Cosyleon
Sabina Genesisio

Terry Hart
Carmen Howard
Louella Salazar

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Citizen Comments)

There were no public comments.

CONSENT ITEMS:

Ms. Carmen Howard, PACOG Manager, reported there were two items listed on the agenda under the Consent Items. She summarized the Consent Items for PACOG.

Acting Chairman Flores asked if there were any other additions or amendments to the Consent Items or if any of the members or audience would like an item removed or discussed that was on the Consent agenda. There were no other additions or amendments.

It was moved by Harry Hochstetler, seconded by Vicente Martinez Ortega, and passed unanimously to approve the two Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of May 26, 2022 Meeting; and

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- Treasurer's Report (receive and file November 2021, December 2021, January 2022, February 2022, March 2022, and April 2022 Financial Reports).

REGULAR ITEMS:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A) Lunch Appreciation

Acting Chairman Flores thanked Pueblo West Metropolitan District for providing lunch for today's meeting.

B) Plaque Presentation to John Adams, MPO Manager

Acting Chairman Flores presented a plaque to Mr. John Adams, outgoing MPO Manager, for his many years of service to PACOG and the MPO. He stated he has been invaluable and has always been accessible. He thanked him and wished well in his retirement.

Mr. Adams thanked everyone, noting he appreciated the PACOG board for its involvement in the MPO. He felt many things have been accomplished over the last six years. He stated the Pueblo area is growing and there will be a lot of new challenges in transportation. He wished everyone well.

MANAGER'S REPORT

(A) EPAC Minutes/Statement Report

Ms. Howard reported in the PACOG members' packets are the minutes of the June 2, 2022 Environmental Policy Advisory Committee meeting. This being an information item, no formal action was required.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Terry Hart, Region 10 Transportation Commissioner, reported the Colorado Transportation Commission met on June 15-16. The Transportation Commission is heading into its next fiscal year cycle. He stated a budget workshop was conducted where dollars were adjusted and moved around to take care of the various projects. He stated the cost of doing projects has increased by at least 25% over the last year. Staff has been working on how to fine tune projects. He stated the State received new funds, but the costs have gone up and are projected to remain high.

Mr. Hart stated Vail Pass has a high accident rate and there are several improvements being done to it. Adjustments to the design by engineers found that by doing the east-west lanes at a more appropriate time, the costs went down.

Mr. Hart stated there was an update on the 10-Year Transportation Plan. CDOT reported most of the jurisdictions have submitted their final thoughts. He stated it is important that all the jurisdictions submit in a timely basis, especially with the weather. The updates on the 10-Year Transportation Plan were done, noting a lot had to do with amending attachments that are designed to help people understand the greenhouse gas issues.

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Mr. Hart stated there was a lot of conversation about updating the freight policy. One of the things they are looking at is hazmat routing. He stated there are various hazmat routes in the State. The Colorado State Patrol asked for CDOT and the Transportation Commission to weigh in on those routing issues.

Mr. Hart stated there are new ways to measure greenhouse gas emissions. The Transportation Commission has adopted the greenhouse gas emissions policy. The first jurisdictions that had to comply were those in Northern Colorado which have the greatest contribution to greenhouse gases. Their plans must be turned in by October this year. The Pueblo MPO will be doing the same later because it is not a major contributor.

Mr. Hart stated I-270 has an enormous amount of traffic, noting it is both freight and rush hour traffic. The highways, as well as the bridges, have problems. The bridges are bad, noting lanes are being closed so the bridges can be rebuilt.

Mr. Hart stated amendments were proposed for the Floyd Hill project. This is another high accident, high traffic area. The Transportation Commission authorized adjustments to this budget to continue to improve it. On the west side, the highway will be raised to make it smoother around the curve.

Mr. Hart stated discussion occurred on the bridge and tunnel enterprise. The State currently funds its bridges and tunnels through this enterprise. This is designed to handle revenues outside the tax revenues such as high-speed lanes in the mountain areas. A toll allows the State to collect the money without being caught up in the TABOR limits.

Mr. Hart stated the Transportation Commission had a tour of the KOA facility on Tower Road in the Denver area. CDOT has placed a lot of money into it recently not only to handle Region 1 (Denver) but other entities across the State. The State's heavy vehicle maintenance program is done at this facility. State trucks or heavy equipment can be rebuilt at the facility. There is a test system for how to control stormwater, noting people are trained to do this at the facility. All State highway signs are made there too.

Mr. Hart asked the PACOG members to let him know what is needed in the Pueblo through the local MPO staff. He stays connected with them. Acting Chairman Flores thanked Mr. Hart for attending the PACOG meetings and keeping them informed.

Mr. Hart thanked Mr. John Adams for all his assistance in understanding the transportation issues, especially when he was on STAC. He stated he would be missed and wished him well.

Mr. Rob Frei, CDOT, stated Mr. Hart covered everything in his report.

STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC) UPDATE

There was no report. There was no STAC meeting in June.

STATUS ON SOUTHWEST CHIEF PASSENGER RAIL

Mr. Dennis Flores, PACOG's representative to the Southwest Chief Passenger Rail Commission (now known as the Front Range Passenger Rail District), reported they are in the process of converting from a commission to a district. The District has been working on getting its Federal ID

number and bank account. He stated he has been in the process of putting all the insurance together through a special district (pool arrangement). There are 16 members on the District. The members are located throughout the State of Colorado, noting he represents Pueblo. It looks like it will be an entity and have a new executive director along with a small staff. They should be going into business by July 1st.

DISCUSSION ON FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS

Mr. Martinez Ortega stated he spoke with different individuals, as well as Mayor Gradisar, about being a part of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). He felt that the Mayor is right that the City of Pueblo should not take part in the RTA, especially if they have to pay for Pueblo West roads. Acting Chairman Flores stated an RTA would need to be a ballot issue. He stated in El Paso County (Colorado Springs) they taxed themselves in increments of five years at a time. There are smaller communities attached to their RTA. He stated there are positives and negatives, but at some point PACOG needs to discuss the possibility of an RTA. Someone from El Paso County could be invited to a PACOG meeting to discuss it.

Mr. Hart stated this is something that our local communities would need to decide. He felt there is a huge value in an RTA because it allows you to cobble together your efforts and funding to get these projects done. He stated the old days of us sitting back and saying "we want our share" is gone. The jurisdictions that are getting their major projects done are the ones that can figure out how to come up with some local funding. The local funding or grant funding helps the conversation in getting prioritized at the Statewide discussion. He hoped that the City, County, and Pueblo West and any other entities would engage in a serious conversation in looking what it can or can't do. It does have to go to the ballot, noting the ballot would have to indicate how it is being created and how it would impose any taxes. Mr. Martinez Ortega stated voters want to see their roads being fixed rather than going to an RTA. Acting Chairman Flores stated there has never been a serious conversation about going down that road. The real issue is that the rules have been changed through CDOT. The rules are that more communities having to contribute to projects. When you have a poorer community, how is this done? It is potentially through an RTA. He stated the citizens would have to be willing to be taxed. The way it was sold in El Paso County is that it was sunset every five years. He stated if we don't have any money to contribute to a project, we don't have a priority anymore. He felt it is going to take a lot of discussion. Mr. Martinez Ortega stated El Paso County has a higher median income, noting there is disparity between here and there.

Mr. Ortiz stated discussion at the last PACOG meeting was preliminary. He felt it was a good idea. Unfortunately, based upon the landscape of funding, he felt it was going to become a necessity. A ballot measure will have to be done to create and fund it. He felt this is our only chance of getting these bigger transportation projects done. He stated he did not believe the Pueblo West consideration is a factor. He felt we are talking about a funding mechanism for securing funding and getting major projects done. This will not be used for backfilling budgets at the City and County level. He felt this is very important. It is time to get out in the community and make some presentations on how the RTA would work. He suggested polling could also be done to get a feel on how this can get established. He felt it is inevitable; it is a matter of when it will occur. He felt it is stronger being City and County to effectuate transportation issues.

MPO STAFF REPORT

A) MMOF 2022 Priority Projects - 14-Day Public Comment

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported the Transportation Advisory Committee met and were able to identify several projects. The projects still need to go through a 30-day public comment process. She stressed the importance of the members attending next month's meeting for final action on the projects. Initially, there were 11 project applications submitted at a cost of \$11 million. She stated only seven projects will be awarded and proceeded to go through the projects.

Ms. Cosyleon reported the first project is the Northern Avenue Trail Phase 3, which is an existing project. More money is being requested, noting the total MMOF funding for this project is \$693,494. The project will design and construct a 10' wide concrete trail between Cambridge and Prairie Avenue and then provide sidewalk improvements on Prairie to Amherst. Sidewalks will be widened as well as improve the ADA access and provide traffic signal improvements at Prairie and Northern Avenue.

Ms. Cosyleon reported the second project is the Prairie-Lake Minnequa Connector Trail Project, noting this is also an existing project. The project goes from Prairie Avenue to Tucci Avenue to Lake Minnequa. There will be a trail from north to south from Pueblo Boulevard to Tucci Avenue. There will be a new trail created along this corridor for safety. This will allow pedestrians and bicyclists another access to get to Lake Minnequa without having to travel on Prairie Avenue, which is a busy street and the sidewalks are narrow.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the third project is the Westside Trail (Pikes Peak Park) Phase 1 only. Currently, the trail comes up from the Arkansas River trail and it stops at 18th Street. The project, when finished, will now go from 18th Street to 31st Street. Phase 1, which is what will be funded now, will go from 18th Street to 24th Street.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the fourth project is the Transit Vanpool. Pueblo Transit will facilitate the creation of vanpools, subsidized by the City, to help meet the commuting needs of commuters who reside or work in Pueblo, especially those that ride to and from work an average of three or more days a week and with a round-trip of more than 15 miles. There will be data collected which will be helpful in future endeavors.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the fifth project is the Joe Martinez Boulevard Trail (east) (Purcell to Pueblo Boulevard/11th Street). This is a multimodal trail going from Purcell running parallel to the new unnamed boulevard. The trail will then proceed south along the western side of Pueblo Boulevard 1.2 miles to the Arkansas River trailhead at 11th Street. It was originally a concrete trail but will now be an asphalt trail to minimize the cost. The project is being funded by MMOF Federal Recovery, MMOF State, and the Carbon Reduction Program.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the sixth project is the Joe Martinez Boulevard Trail (west) (Purcell to McCulloch). The Pueblo West community system specifies an 8' width paved or concrete surface. The trail will start at McCulloch and Joe Martinez (on the north side) and continue going southeast ending at Purcell Boulevard.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the seventh and final project is the SDS Trail North Park Phase II. The trail will go from Purcell to Industrial then to the SDS trail heading north to Jaroso/Purcell Boulevard. This trail would connect multimodal activities throughout the County.

It was moved by Vicente Martinez Ortega and seconded by Regina Maestri to approve the MMOF 2022 Priority Projects as presented. Discussed occurred.

Acting Chairman Flores asked about the Westside Trail, Phase I. He stated there has been a lot of discussion about the berms between 18th and 24th Streets. Some people think the berms are there only for dirt to be moved around. There are also sections where people have been throwing trash. He inquired if the project will consider that this is a permanent berm and it is a result of the water that flows down and allowed the remapping of the City's flood maps when the new levee section was rebuilt. He asked if the new trail section will be next to the berms. Ms. Cosyleon replied the trail would be going on the west side of Wild Horse Creek, which wouldn't impact it. Acting Chairman Flores stated the berm is needed because of the flood mitigation for the water that goes down into the Arkansas River. Ms. Maestri added it is on the other side of Tuxedo Boulevard.

Acting Chairman Flores asked what is going on with Prairie Avenue, noting this is the highest priority street that the City has identified to be fixed. It will be an expensive project because it will take rebuilding part of Prairie Avenue. He asked if the trail would be from Safeway going west. Ms. Cosyleon responded at the current time there is a little sidewalk, but it is going to be expanded and the curb ramps will be updated.

After discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Acting Chairman Flores reminded the members that the final approval on the MMOF 2022 Priority Projects will be brought before PACOG at its July 28th meeting. He expressed the importance of the members being present at this meeting to vote since it entails over \$5 million in MMOF projects for the Pueblo area.

B) Contract for On-Call Transportation Planning and Support Services

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported the City requests qualified consultants to submit a qualifications statement for on-call technical planning services for PACOG's regional travel demand model, which may also include input on the development of the regional land use model to ensure data, documents, plans, and studies produced are as accurate as possible and are consistent with required federal, State, and regional methodologies and policies. She stated the current travel demand model coincides with the 2010 Census, and it needs to be updated to the 2020 Census. The consultant would be providing various planning related tasks such as: performance measure calculations, visualization, reporting, updating existing planning documents, Travel Demand Modeling/forecasting, Plan amendments, GIS, and traffic impact studies. She stated the GIS would improve what is currently on the City's maps and provide information on where future roads might go, as well as traffic impact studies.

Ms. Cosyleon continued that the consultant should be qualified to update and/or modify a Travel Demand Model, complete traffic counts, and work on TransCAD Travel Demand Software. The consultant must meet FHWA and CDOT performance measures calculations and documentation requirements. Other requirements would include land use planning modeling; GIS program-ArcGIS Pro; knowledge on how models can be manipulated, represented, and how they can be shared; traffic impact studies; and MPO program administration and coordination; public involvement

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activities; assist the City/MPO staff with the implementation of the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan; knowledge of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions standards and reduction strategies; provide assistance to City/MPO staff in the development and ongoing monitoring and updating of the PACOG Transportation Improvement Program; and assist the City/MPO staff with development of an Areawide Highway Safety Plan.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the consultant will provide deliverables such as: work to be completed and submitted to City/MPO electronically in an agreed to format at the time of the task assignment, all work completed will be available for use by City/MPO staff in planning related documents and for public review, etc. She stated this is will be a two-year contract which can be amended.

Ms. Cosyleon stated the consultant will be scored using different factors such as: knowledge, experience, etc.

It was moved by Vicente Martinez Ortega and seconded by Epimenio Griego to approve the contract for On-Call Transportation Planning and Support Service. Discussion ensued.

Acting Chairman Flores asked what the new items on this contract as compared to past contracts are. Ms. Cosyleon responded the Travel Demand Model must be done daily, noting the current MPO staff does not have the capability of doing this. The new 2020 Census data will need to be included. Also included is the reclassification of roads and visualization. The visualization of roadways will help with planning the development. Plan amendments had been done in the past but were done by staff. This would assist staff in making sure that these amendments are done on a timely basis. The GIS data would be updated, noting things change all the time and this would allow for the data to be current.

Acting Chairman Flores asked if there is anything which we could capitalize on. Ms. Cosyleon replied it was the Travel Demand Model and how it would impact our current traffic.

Acting Chairman Flores stated the last report provided by CDOT regarding rest stops on I-25 indicated that there was no solution other than placing the rest stops at another location within a profit-mode business. He asked if any of these additional areas where staff is able to subcontract if PACOG has the ability for a consultant to look at this so we can have the best possible solution because there has been no solution, noting the rest stops have been closed for a significant amount of time. He wondered if this would allow for PACOG to hire a consultant to do this. Ms. Cosyleon replied yes. She stated freight planning is included in the RFQ. Acting Chairman Flores asked Ms. Cosyleon to provide PACOG with a follow-up at its next meeting. He stated it doesn't look good that the City has no rest stop.

Ms. Maestri asked how the maps are updated. Ms. Cosyleon replied GIS has different layers. CDOT does some of it, but future planning should be done on our side.

Acting Chairman Flores asked Ms. Wendy Pettit, CDOT, if she would like to add anything. Ms. Pettit replied everything is good to go.

After discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

C) TAC Bylaws Update

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported staff went to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) regarding creation of bylaws. The TAC brainstormed about creating chair and 1st vice chair and 2nd vice chair positions. The reason for looking at the organizational structure is to get TAC more involved in the process. She stated the chair would be reviewing the agenda and running the meetings. This would allow TAC to be more of a participant. Staff and TAC are still in the process of working on the bylaws.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

D) Greenhouse Gas Directive

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported a few revisions were provided to the State Transportation Commission last month on mitigation measures for greenhouse gas. The Pueblo MPO has only until it submits its new Long-Range Transportation Plan to comply with the greenhouse gas emissions policy. He stated the consultant will help assist them in running models, etc.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

E) MPO Manager Update

Mr. Scott Hobson, Acting Director of the City of Pueblo Planning and Community Development Department stated he would like to recognize Mr. John Adams for his 6+ years serving as the MPO Manager for PACOG. He stated Mayor Gradisar has authorized filling the position. The job description has been revised and it is anticipated the notice for applications will be distributed in the next couple of weeks. By August or September, there should be a new MPO Manager onboard.

Acting Chairman Flores asked about the changes to the job description. Mr. Hobson replied there are minor modifications and it has been simplified. The qualifications have been adjusted to where the applicant will require a master's degree and two years' experience working with an MPO.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

F) MPO 101

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported this is a request from one of the TAC members. She stated an orientation is done for new PACOG members on all aspects of the PACOG responsibilities/roles. She stated a TAC member requested a presentation be done on transportation matters. This would allow TAC members to understand their role. She stated a presentation will probably be done sometime for the PACOG members.

This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

G) Administrative Modification to 2022-2025 TIP - SRDA Vehicle Replacement

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported this is an administrative modification to the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program, which would allow for a new vehicle purchase for SRDA.

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This being an information item, no formal action was taken.

H) Other Transportation Matters

There were no other transportation matters.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

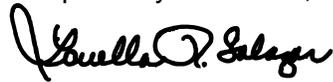
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, Acting Chairman Flores adjourned the meeting at 1:26 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, July 28, 2022, at 12:15 p.m. (Note: The meeting will be held at the Pueblo County Emergency Operations Center, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting will also be held virtually on Zoom.)

Respectfully submitted,



Louella R. Salazar
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS

JOINT PUEBLO CITY COUNCIL AND BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Following the regular PACOG meeting, there was a joint meeting held between the Pueblo City Council and Board of County Commissioners to make an appointment to the Electrical Board of Appeals. The following person was selected: Robert Berrier (Journeyman).

The City Council and BOCC will need to ratify this appointment at their respective meetings.