

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

APRIL 28, 2022

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, April 28, 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. Larry Atencio, PACOG Chairman, at 12:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Larry Atencio
Mike Cafasso
Barbara Clementi
Dennis Flores
Heather Graham

Epimenio Griego
Ed Gutierrez
Regina Maestri
Vicente Martinez-Ortega
Chris Wiseman

Those members absent were:

Chris DeLuca
Harry Hochstetler
Sarah Martinez

Garrison Ortiz
Doug Proal
Lori Winner

Also present were:

John Adams
Nick Gradisar
Terry Hart
Carmen Howard

Dan Kogovsek
David Russell
Louella Salazar

PUBLIC COMMENTS (Citizen Comments)

There were no public comments.

CONSENT ITEMS:

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

Chairman Atencio 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 Mike Cafasso, seconded by Dennis Flores, and passed unanimously to approve the three Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of March 24, 2022 Meeting;

PACOG MINUTES

April 28, 2022

Page 2

- A Resolution Identifying a 10-Year Pipeline of Local On-System Highway, Bridge and Transit Projects to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for the Pueblo MPO and TPR Planning Region; and
- A Resolution Amending the Pueblo Area Council of Governments' (PACOG) FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Amend \$1,500,000 into FY 2025 Program Year for the Construction of a Roundabout at Lake Ave. and Orman Ave. with Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Funds and Directing the Urban Transportation Planning Division to Execute Said Amendments.

REGULAR ITEMS:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

(A) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Atencio thanked the Pueblo School District No. 60 for providing lunch for today's meeting.

(B) Support Letter to RAISE Grant Application for Joe Martinez Boulevard

Chairman Atencio reported he had signed, on behalf of PACOG, a letter of support pertaining to a RAISE grant application submitted by Pueblo County Government for the extension of Joe Martinez Boulevard.

MANAGER'S REPORT

(A) ADA Committee Minutes

Ms. Howard reported in the PACOG members' packets are the minutes of the March 3, 2022 ADA Advisory Committee meeting. This being an information item, no formal action is required.

(B) Introduction of Tara Marshall, Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Ms. Howard introduced Ms. Tara Marshall from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). She stated she had the opportunity to work with Ms. Marshall on the update to Pueblo Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Marshall stated DOLA supports local governments. DOLA has worked with the County and City offices on applications for Energy and Mineral Impact Funds (EIAF). DOLA would like to be more engaged with COGs in the southeast region of Colorado, which includes 9 counties and 36 municipalities. She noted DOLA has also worked in Pueblo County with water districts, as well as the Towns of Boone and Rye. She stated she is looking forward to coming to future PACOG meetings.

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION AND MITIGATION OPTIONS FUND (MMOF)

Mr. Michael Snow, CDOT HQ, MPO and Rural Planning Liaison, reported that Senate Bill 260, which was passed last summer, made changes to the fundamentals of the MMOF Program by expanding it and calling out some more specific purposes and goals, including the targeting of multimodal access and choices for disproportionately impacted communities. It also identified that

the program is eligible for and intended to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) resulting from transportation. There are five projects which are eligible for the program and are now eligible specifically for modeling tools. The GHG project would reduce vehicle miles traveled or increase multimodal travel. Senate Bill 260 used to be a one-time stream of funding, but now there is annual funding coming into the program. There are four different sources of funding. The first is the Legislature placed a portion of Colorado's ARPA funds and transferred them to MMOF and then called out three different sources of State funds. The first was a total of \$108.1 million of State surplus revenues. FY 2021 was a strong year fiscally for the State such that all those funds are ready to be transferred to the MMOF. There are two other streams of revenue which will begin later, which are \$10.5 million from the State General fund beginning in FY 2022 and carryout into FY 2032 and \$109 million from the State Retail Delivery Fees between now and 2032. The Federal recovery fund (ARPA) and the surplus revenues combined amounts have been allocated to all the TPRs and MPOs today. PACOG will be making award decisions on what projects to award those to. He stated the Pueblo area was awarded \$5.5 million.

Mr. Snow stated half of the funds to be awarded are Federal funds, which means they carry Federally-required projects and applicant requirements. He stated guidance has been provided through the webpage. He noted typically Federal funds cannot match other Federal funds. However, the U.S. Treasury made a final determination in February that these Federal recovery funds may be used to match other Federal programs, such as FHWA and FTA programs.

Mr. Snow indicated match requirements have been eliminated for the Pueblo region, noting this doesn't mean that they don't have to be matched. As a board, PACOG can encourage local agency matching but it is not required under the MMOF program.

PINON REST AREA UPDATE

Mr. Richard Zamora, CDOT Region 2 Director, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Pinon Rest Area. He stated there are two separate rest areas between Fountain and Pueblo. The two rest areas (northbound and southbound of I-25) have been closed since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic or approximately two years. Neither has a good source for potable water, noting the southbound rest area has been experiencing significant problems with the aqua-waste system. He stated different types of waste have contributed to this (i.e., oil filters, clothes, etc.). It doesn't allow the biology of the system to work the way it should. CDOT has replaced systems over the years. It needs to be reconstructed once again to get it working properly. The well has high selenium, which exceeds acceptable levels. The northbound rest area has a leach field, which is also starting to fail. CDOT is looking at several options. There are three alternatives or designs that the consultant firm came up with to make the rest area work correctly. The first would be to connect to City sewer at a cost estimate of approximately \$7 million. The rest area would need to be annexed into the City. CDOT is unsure if the City would be willing to do this. There are two different local agencies which CDOT would work with to try and make this design happen: the City of Pueblo or Pueblo West Metropolitan District. This design was rejected as being too cost prohibitive. The second would be to design and build a leach field with holding tanks and a pump station. This design was rejected by the local health department. The third would construct a lagoon system which would have two 10,000-gallon septic tanks and pump stations. The estimated cost is \$3.1 million. This design would require CDOT maintenance to pump the septic system approximately once every two months at a cost of \$1,000 per pump (\$6,000/year). The lagoon system would also require CDOT to have a certified inspector to inspect and certify the lagoons monthly.

Mr. Zamora stated the southbound rest area is currently closed and, prior to closing, CDOT was pumping the liquids out at a cost of \$1,400 every two months. If the rest area is ever to be reopened, a full cleaning of the vault(s) would be required. He stated rest areas will not have dedicated funding assets until FY 2024. He stated CDOT needs to think outside the box to meaningfully improve the lack of truck parking in Colorado.

Mr. Craig Hurst, CDOT, spoke about CDOT's efforts on truck parking. There is a potential opportunity for a solution, so we don't lose the truck parking. CDOT did a Phase 1 study a couple of years ago regarding the increased levels of freight traffic, the closure of rest areas, more stringent control of Hours of Service (HOS) and using Electronic Logging Devices (ELD). The truck parking project from CDOT started in Fall 2017. The truck parking study not only looked at the accessibility but also inventory and how the private sector is communicating open spaces. The study included several E-freight corridors in Colorado (i.e., I-25 from the north to south borders). The trucking study highlighted specific needed areas on corridors. On I-70, several locations were identified where there is overcapacity as reflected in the data, noting overcapacity is prevalent throughout all corridors in the State. The purpose and intent are to look at truck parking and public/private ownership opportunities. On the first project, CDOT never signed an agreement with the private company but they all came together and provided input as to what they could do to make sure that the project was successful. CDOT is looking for opportunities throughout the State. They are looking to address the needs and issues of the local communities, and how to solve some of these problems. A list of challenges has been identified and a playbook has been developed. All the legal and regulatory obstacles have been gone through. The parking project he has been talking about specifically started at the end of 2020 with the Town of Bennett. There are a lot of warehouse facilities and transportation needs in this area. It was found as a high need area for truck parking capacity. The challenge at the State level is that they don't want to compete with truck stop businesses or the long-term maintenance without revenue. The Town of Bennett came to CDOT as a willing partner because of their growth. The idea was to work with Love's Truck Stop to add 70 new parking spaces. CDOT has been working with the Federal Highway Administration on its Interstate Oasis Program, noting the Bennett project didn't qualify for it. Love's Truck Stop had to be willing to make the financial investment into their own facilities.

Mr. Hurst stated CDOT has identified a potential opportunity in the Pueblo area. One of the key reasons this is being prioritized is because of the challenges at the Pinon Rest Area. CDOT is exploring a truck parking expansion option in CDOT Region 2 and is trying to use Bennett as a model. There would need to be willing partners in order to do this. The location is near the Love's Truck Stop off Drew Dix Parkway. Currently, there is vacant land surrounding the area and the landowner is interested in a realignment of the frontage road. There are ongoing discussions about the right-of-way access and how CDOT can start working on the solution. Funding opportunity for this and how CDOT will be able to fund it would be through the National Highway Freight Program, noting these are funds which are focused on freight projects and enhance safety and mobility Statewide. CDOT is working with the Region 2 planners, who will be placing an application for this project. The call for ideas is coming up at the end of May, noting this is not a full application but rather submittal of an overview of the project and fine tuning it to make sure it is a good qualifying project for this Federal program. A full application would need to be submitted by July 18th. The money would not be issued until October. The National Highway Freight Program process is thorough and is quantitative and qualitative, and it goes through an in-depth stakeholder coordination. There is an advisory council from CDOT that consists of 35 freight industry business leaders, representatives from STAC, and a few elected officials. He stated he would like to know if PACOG is interested in pursuing this.

Mr. Zamora stated the Pinon Rest Area would probably be closed and they would get a Freight grant to acquire property near the Love's Truck Stop to expand the parking. The buildings would be demolished, graded, and repaved for overflow truck parking. Some type of portable toilet system would be provided during those kinds of events. He stated this could create a truck parking net gain in the area. He stated he spoke with the Colorado American Motor Carriage Association a few years ago and the biggest concern he heard was no net loss of trucking space.

Mr. Flores stated he didn't hear anything during the presentation about people passing through Pueblo and needing restroom facilities. He stated he didn't know whether this private partnership places a responsibility on Love's Truck Stop to make sure they have the facilities to take care of people who are coming off the road. Mr. Zamora replied this is an issue in terms of people wanting to use the toilet facilities. He stated it would be very expensive to repair the Pinon Rest Area. The distance between the current truck stop and the rest area is roughly six miles. In terms of net benefit, there would be access to restrooms. He stated CDOT has not engaged in a conversation with Love's Truck Stop yet. CDOT wanted to talk about this with local government officials before proceeding further.

Mr. Gradisar asked what the objection by the local health department to the septic system was. Mr. Zamora responded it was soils related, noting CDOT previously had a septic system in the area and the waste was pumping back up through the ground and saturated it. Mr. Robert Madrid, CDOT, added septic doesn't work in the area and there is no way to get liquids. It needs to be above ground. Mr. Gradisar asked if it could be fixed. Mr. Madrid replied yes, but it would be costly. Mr. Gradisar asked if it is fair to say that CDOT wants to get out of the rest area business. Mr. Zamora felt this wasn't a fair statement. Mr. Gradisar asked about the rest area by Larkspur, which was closed. Mr. Zamora replied he did not know why it was closed. He stated we need to make sure from the perspective of travelers and tourism that we have acceptable and appropriate facilities. He proposed possibly closing the Pinon Rest Area and finding an opportunity somewhere else in the State, noting it might not be in Region 2. He stated the Pinon Rest Area has been closed due to health and safety issues.

Mr. Hart believed there has been a general attitude from CDOT to cutback away from the rest area business. He stated he is opposed to this, indicating he felt this was a huge mistake. He stated we need to make sure we are providing for all the parking and facilities' needs for the freight industry. He stated a rest area serves as two other functions. One is the general traveling public. The other side is when you travel to other states there is a lot of pride which go into their rest areas. There is a tourist economic development function also associated with rest areas. He felt Colorado has missed the boat over the last decade. It's all about the dollars. There is only so much money that can be done with so many things, so there are things that have fallen off, noting the State cannot afford them. There are high maintenance expenses associated with a single or two rest areas. He is interested in moving it down to Love's Truck Stop because there is a connection to municipal utilities. He doesn't want to do a truck stop. He felt we shouldn't rely on private industries to provide the service. He would like for us to move forward but would like to have more local involvement in the planning. He stated Federal law only allows you to do certain things in rest areas, noting commercial things cannot be done in rest areas. The idea of doing public/private partnerships allows you to navigate this. He felt the community needs to look at this. He felt a rest area should be something which introduces you to our community. A bigger parking lot for freight trucks is not going to accomplish this. He stated he would like there to be local involvement in the planning and leverage of the freight money to see what else we can do with it.

Mr. Wiseman stated the rest area between Pueblo and Colorado City was closed, as well as the one between Trinidad and Walsenburg, and one was built closer to the City of Trinidad. He stated this is probably what we need to look at where it is accessed from both sides of the highway. He stated other states do a little better job with this, noting New Mexico does a good job.

Ms. Maestri stated there are subdivisions in the area. She stated there are clay soil issues all around which have septic systems. Mr. Zamora felt the closure is more related to the volume of waste. Ms. Maestri asked if CDOT was going to try and come closer to Love's and tie in, why are they not able to have their own separate septic system. Mr. Zamora stated they could possibly look at building another rest area further south. They would need to make sure on what utilities they would need. Ms. Maestri stated you wouldn't have to upgrade the facility, but only have one that is available for people to stop and use the facilities. Mr. Zamora stated this could probably be explored, but the question is what's a better use. He stated it might be better to partner locally and have a truck stop which works for everyone, which might be done at a lower cost. From a rest area perspective, CDOT does not have a lot of money. Mr. Hart stated this basically came out of the general local budget, noting it is difficult to maintain rest areas, noting the State created a special line item for rest areas. He felt this issue needs to be tackled Statewide, noting they are doing the best they can with the money. He stated even the new rest stops in Trinidad and Colorado City are starting to show wear and tear. Chairman Atencio asked if CDOT would be placing signage as part of the private-public partnership with Love's. Mr. Zamora answered that signage would be posted.

Mr. Zamora stated we need to figure out if we are going to submit the idea to the Freight group next month. He asked if PACOG would be willing to support the idea. Ms. Maestri stated she wasn't sure if the community was proud of its Love's Truck Stop, noting there is a lot of crime in the area. She stated the locals stay away from the area. Mr. Flores questioned if CDOT is asking for PACOG to further study this, noting they are not going to make any decision today. Mr. Zamora replied yes. Mr. Hart felt we needed to study it further. Mr. Cafasso agreed.

Chairman Atencio asked if a committee needed to be formed. Mr. Hart stated he would work with Mr. Zamora and make sure anybody who wanted to be involved in the conversation would be included. He asked that those who are interested to please email him.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chairman Atencio asked about the intersection of Monument and 4th Street. He stated he has been getting complaints from local constituents about installation of a pedestrian light. Mr. Zamora stated he would check on the status of this complaint with his staff. Chairman Atencio stated there are four businesses, one on each corner, noting it is a very busy intersection.

Mr. Terry Hart, Region 10 State Transportation Commissioner, reported several budget amendments are being worked on by the Transportation Commission. They are working on finalizing the 2022 budget, which ends on June 30th. The Transportation Commission is in the process of preparing its 2023 funds. On the 2022 budget, they are looking at shifting some funds, as well as the Federal money coming in now and in the future. He indicated the money that is divided up Statewide is based on certain equity formulas.

Mr. Hart stated they talked about their innovative mobility. They are working on the technological advancements and the ability for our highways to handle augmented vehicles and the infrastructure needed for electric vehicles and charging stations.

Mr. Hart stated discussion occurred on the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) policy directive. The Transportation Commission adopted regulations for GHG and directed CDOT staff to work with the State MPOs and TPRs and develop models for GHG reduction in the transportation planning process. It should be brought to a head in the next couple of months.

Mr. Hart reported on the Strategic Transportation Safety Plan. He stated accidents on the State highways are going up, as well as injuries and fatalities. The demographics show that it had been going down, but over the last two or three years it has been going up again. This is happening in Colorado and across the United States. The Federal government will be working with the Transportation Commission on various plans in order to identify where the problems are and how to get them corrected.

Mr. Hart stated a conversation occurred on advancing Year 4 of our rural paving operation.

Mr. Hart stated CDOT is working to provide as much backbone for high speed internet fiber throughout the area. He stated there is a bit of controversy since CDOT is not supposed to be engaged in anything that is a private or for-profit arena. He stated we need this backbone for transportation needs.

Mr. Hart stated a presentation was made by the Small Business Diversity Committee. The presentation centered on dealing more fairly with the disproportionately impacted communities from transportation. Discussion occurred on what was done in the past and where to head in the future.

Mr. Hart stated the Transportation Commission passed several resolutions pertaining to the above-mentioned items. He stated the Legislative and STAC reports were provided. He stated they rely heavily on STAC because they want to make sure what they do Statewide is directly connected.

Mr. Hart stated Central I-70 in the northern part of Denver is being lifted and being redesigned, noting this also deals with disproportionately impacted communities. He stated the Transportation Commission advanced \$1 million, which was left over from the project, in order to set up the administration of this program that provides subsidies to the people who have been impacted with the highway cutting through their neighborhoods. The subsidy would allow them to use multimodal transportation which is connected to the area.

Mr. Flores thanked Mr. Hart for coming to PACOG and informing them of what is occurring.

STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC) UPDATE

Mr. Chris Wiseman, PACOG's STAC representative, stated he did not have anything to report.

STATUS ON SOUTHWEST CHIEF PASSENGER RAIL

Mr. Dennis Flores, PACOG's representative to the Southwest Chief Passenger Rail Commission, reported at the last meeting the Southwest Chief Passenger Rail Commission transitioned and now has been changed to the Front Range Rail District, subject to Senate Bill 238. He stated Governor Polis will be filling six positions, which will go to the Senate for confirmation. This is the Commission which will handle the rail line between the border of Wyoming all the way to the border of New Mexico, with an option into Boulder. He stated there was a lot of work done by the old Commission and, hopefully, there will be money from the Federal government to get this done.

DISCUSSION ON FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS

Mr. Wiseman indicated he has not had time to finish everything. Once he is done, he will share it with Ms. Salazar who will send it out to the members.

MPO STAFF REPORT

A) FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program, Administrative Notification Project Funding in the MPO and TPR Area

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported the administrative notification pertained to resurfacing of U.S. 50B from U.S. 50B Bonforte to the Pueblo Chemical Depot. The current design of the project has gone to bid, and bids have come in over the engineering estimate. In order to award the project, CDOT Region 2 will need to add \$2,232,126 of surface treatment funds for the construction. He stated across the State transportation projects have skyrocketed.

B) PACOG/MPO Website Update Short Demonstration

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, presented a short demonstration on the new PACOG/MPO website. She stated the new website has not gone final and encouraged everyone to look at it and provide comments. She stated the website was basically setup for their Federal partners who typically want to know what TIP amendments are, public participation, etc. It is anticipated the website will go final in the next several days.

C) GHG Policy Directive Update

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported the Intergovernmental Agencies Committee, who is developing the policy directive regarding greenhouse gas emissions, will be meeting next week to finalize the draft and take it to Transportation Commission next month.

D) Other Transportation Matters

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported there was a request from the Transit board to write a letter of support to apply for RAISE funding for the new administration and maintenance facility. He asked PACOG how they wanted to proceed.

Chairman Atencio asked Mr. Adams to draft the letter, which he would sign on behalf of PACOG.

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, Chairman Atencio adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, May 26, 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 appointments to the following boards: Pueblo Depot Activity Development Authority, Community Services Advisory Commission, and Plumbing Board of Appeals. The following persons were selected:

Pueblo Depot Activity Development Authority Board of Directors

Eileen Dennis

Community Services Advisory Commission

Dynelle Abeyta, Julie Fairman, and Cindy Lau - April 30, 2026 ending terms
Steven Rodriguez - April 30, 2023 ending term

Plumbing Board of Appeals (Journeyman)

Steven Contreras

The City Council and BOCC will need to ratify these appointments at their respective meetings.