

# MINUTES

## PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

### January 23, 2025, Meeting

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, January 23, 2025. The meeting was held in person. The meeting was called to order by PACOG Chairman, Mark Aliff at 12:00 p.m.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present were:**

Dennis Flores-City Council	Zach Swearingen -County Commissioner
Ed Gutierrez-Salt Creek Sanitation	Mark Aliff- City Council
William Thiebaut -Dist. 60	Harry Hochstetler-Colorado City
Chris DeLuca-Dist. 70	Paula McPheeters - County Commissioner
Brett Boston -City Council	Miles Lucero- County Commissioner
Roger Gomez -City Council	

**Members Absent:**

Regina Matri – City Council	Sarah Martinez -City Council
Joseph Latino -City Council	Heather Graham – Mayor City of Pueblo
Doug Proal -Pueblo West	Mike Cafasso-Board of Water Works

**.Also Present Were:**

Sarah Skinner -Pueblo County	Eva Cosyleon PACOG MPO
Bryan Wallace-PMB	Sarah Skinner-Pueblo County
Laura Leyba, ADA committee	Terry Hart-Transportation Commissioner
Don Bruestle PACOG TAC	Jacob Topping-Senator Bennet’s office
Sabina Geniso, Pueblo County	Carmen Howard-Pueblo County
Hanah Haurert-PACOG MPO	Dillion Goodman PACOG MPO
Maureen Paz de Araujo, - Wilson and Co.	Carla Sikes-City Attorney

PACOG Chair, Mark Aliff called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm

PUBLIC COMMENTS; none

**Meeting Overview:**

The meeting covered various aspects of city development, transportation planning, and road safety initiatives. PACOG appointed new officers, discussed budget projections and upcoming projects, and addressed safety concerns in the Pueblo area. The council also considered strategies to reduce traffic accidents and fatalities, emphasizing the importance of data analysis, community involvement, and proactive measures to improve road safety.

Roll call was taken, and it was determined there was a quorum present for the meeting.

The Election of officers was first on the January PACOG agenda.

The Chair of PACOG was selected first: Mr. Mark Aliff was nominated to retain the chair seat, he was confirmed, and reappointed to the Chair position with a motion from Dennis Flores and a second by Chris De Luca.

Next the Vice chair was appointed, the chair was held by Chris DeLuca of District 70. He was nominated to retain the seat by a motion by Dennis Flores and seconded by Mr. Mark Aliff.

Next appointment was that of the treasurer. The seat changed from Mr. Flores to the nominated City Council person, Bret Boston with a motion from Mr. Aliff and a second by Mr. Gomez.

The treasurer oversees the Budget committee. That committee was selected next. There are two positions along with the treasurer on the budget committee. One position needs to be filled by a county commissioner, and the other is a board member. Commissioner McPheeters and Chris DeLuca were appointed to fill the other two seats. Mr. Aliff motioned for the appointment of Mr. DeLuca and Mr. Flores seconded the motion. Ms. McPheeters was appointed by a motion from Mr. Aliff and seconded by Mr. DeLuca.

Lastly the Statewide Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) members were appointed. Ms. Wendy Pettit held the primary seat last year and was reappointed with a motion from Mark Aliff and a second from Mr. DeLuca. The alternate to the committee was appointed by a motion for Mr. Dennis Flores to fill the seat from a motion from Mr. Boston and a second by Mr. Aliff. Ms. Eva Cosyleon also sits on the STAC as the PACOG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Manager.

The consent agenda was next on the agenda. Ms. Carmen Howard, the PACOG Manager introduced the consent items for the PACOG business. The Minutes December 12, 2024, Meeting, the Financial Reports for October and November 2024, the ADA minutes from December 2024, and a resolution reappointing two former representations to the ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EPAC). The items were presented and a motion from Mr. William Thiebaut and a second by Mr. Bret Boston approved the items in totality.

Next Ms. Eva Cosyleon presented her four consent items from the MPO business.

A resolution appointing members of the transportation technical committee (TTC) and the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) for the pueblo area metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

This action appointed the following members from the above committees to TAC TTC and CAC positions:

Cheryl Spinuzzi, Richard Arko, John Wark, Laura Leyba, Tura Cowan, Chuck Aksamit, Matt Pujol, John Chrisman, and John Buttram

A resolution assigning fiscal year 2024 federal highway administration safe streets for all planning and demonstration grant, in the amount of \$959,559 and assigning \$239,890 matching funds from the city of Pueblo, for the pueblo supplemental planning and demonstration project

A resolution assigning federal highway administration bridge investment program grant, in the amount of \$13,713,060, department of local affairs match, in the amount of \$1,750,000, and city of Pueblo match, in the amount of \$811,731 for the planning, demolition, and reconstruction of the union avenue bridge

A resolution assigning youth fare-free transit grant through the zero-fare transit grants program, in the amount of \$62,213.39 for Pueblo Transit youth ride free program for fy25

These items were taken as a whole, with a motion from Mr. William Thibaut and a second by Mr. Bret Boston the items were voted upon unanimously in favor of the MPO consent items.

Next on the agenda were the informational items for the reports to be reviewed and presented in February. The PACOG 604B and 9 – Element's water shed documents were given live links in the agenda for Board members to access the reports and to bring their questions and comments to the February meeting. The Front Range Passenger Rail Report on the station area analysis and the conceptual framework for the track work also had a live link for review and questions and comments at the February meeting.

Next on the agenda were the regular agenda items. Chair Aliff thanked the Board of County Commissioners for the catered lunch.

Next on the agenda were the Transportation items. Terry Hart, our Transportation Commissioner for the PACOG area, gave a brief overview of the latest information on the CDOT Transportation Commission activities.

### **Fiscal Year 25-26 Revenue Projections**

Mr. Hart discussed the revenue projections for the upcoming fiscal year 25-26, which show a reduction of HUTF funding down by about 13 million dollars due to the decrease in Federal funds allocated for pandemic recovery. The proposed CDOT budget with new and rollover money is expected to be in the 3.5-to-4-billion-dollar range for transportation statewide. Terry also addressed the Tabor cap requirements and the plan to manage the reduction in capital projects and maintenance due to the budget shortfall. He mentioned the new Fuel Impact Enterprise Program, which aims to improve transportation and fuel efficiency, and the proposed speed safety camera program to address driving behavior issues especially in work zones. Other topics included the Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise, a Public Private Initiative for wind energy transmission, and a legislative report on transportation-related bills that is being shared by CDOT. The conversation ended with recognitions and a discussion on a proposed amendment to the statewide transportation planning process in the form of a bill introduced to the legislative process to add a 16th Transportation Planning Region(TPR) to the State of Colorado.

Mr. Hart also discussed CDOT's planning process for a new rest stop near the Platteville and I - 25 area. He reported that CDOT staff are identifying potential locations and securing funding for this expensive project. A local advisory committee will be formed to ensure the rest stop meets community needs, with interested parties providing their names to Wendy. Mr. Hart also covered CDOT's 2050 transportation plan progress, completion status of the 10-Year Plan

projects, new projects starting in 2025, and reporting requirements related to greenhouse gas emissions under recent legislation.

The STAC report was given by Wendy Pettit next.

1. **Budget** and Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs):

CDOT is closely monitoring its budget due to recent statewide shortfalls.

A bill proposing the creation of a 16th TPR (instead of 15) has been introduced, giving the Transportation Commission (TC) the option, but not the mandate, to create it.

2. **STAC** operations

The meeting covered the STAC's structure, purpose, meeting schedule, roles, and responsibilities, as defined in its bylaws. Procedures for updating STAC membership were outlined (30-day written notification requirement). The STAC develops a yearly work plan (the current one is included in the meeting packet, and more information is available on their website).

3. **2050 Statewide Transportation Plan (SWP) Update:**

CDOT is approximately one-third complete with the 2050 SWP development. An update to the 10-Year Plan is expected by the end of 2025.

Key planning documents include regional and statewide long-range plans, the 4-year STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program), and the 10-Year Plan).

The 10-Year Plan's progress is significant:

All projects from 2019-2023 are complete or underway. Over 50% of the entire 10-Year Plan is complete or in progress.

40 projects were completed in 2024, and 56 new projects started in 2025. CDOT provides regular updates on the 10-Year Plan through web pages, dashboards, reports, and a long-range transportation visualizer.

4. **Greenhouse Gas** (GHG) Pollution Reduction:

Chris Laplante presented an overview of Colorado's GHG reduction planning standards, referencing key legislation (HB 19-1261, HB 23-016, SB 21-260) and the Colorado Greenhouse Gas Roadmaps.

Roadmap 1.0 aims for a 12.7 million metric ton reduction in GHG pollution by 2030. The GHG Transportation Planning standard (adopted in 2021) requires CDOT and MPOs to create plans improving travel choices. CDOT is responsible for GHG emissions outside MPO areas.

**Next CDOT gave the local project report.**

Ms. Laurel Jones gave the CDOT project update. PACOG discussed ongoing and upcoming projects, including the US 50 B interchange project, the overlay project on

US 50 west of Pueblo West, and the drainage improvement projects east of town. PACOG also mentioned the award of a \$40.5 million grant to install 12 passing lanes between Pueblo and the Kansas state line. Jason Nelson, the CDOT traffic program engineer, provided updates on intersection design for Colorado 45 and the feasibility study for I-25 and Colorado 45. There was a discussion about safety concerns at the Beulah Heights Elementary school area, and PACOG MPO manager confirmed they can help with investigating the issue.

### **The MPO report was next.**

Mr. John Butrum was unable to give his PuebloPlex presentation, so he was rescheduled to the March meeting for his information.

Eva Cosyleon, the MPO Manager, presented on the safety performance measures and sought direction from the board on whether to adopt the state safety targets or set their own safety targets. She gave a presentation included in the packet for further review.

### **PACOG Targets for Pueblo Accident Reduction**

PACOG discussed the increasing number of fatalities and serious injuries in Pueblo over the past decade, with a particular focus on non-motorized accidents. PACOG proposed setting their own targets for reducing these incidents, aiming for a 15% reduction based on previous data. The proposed targets for 2025 were 107 serious injuries, 34 fatalities, 21 non-motorized serious injuries, and 12 non-motorized fatalities. PACOG also suggested addressing these targets by analyzing crash data and identifying high-risk locations. The MPO recommended to the PACOG board that they adopt these Pueblo specific targets if they chose to do so or the statewide targets can be adopted as we have in the past.

### **Improving Road Safety and Collaboration**

PACOG discussed strategies to mitigate traffic hazards and improve road safety. Ms. Cosyleon highlighted the importance of data collection, collaboration between the city and county, and the use of grants to fund safety projects. PACOG board also emphasized the need for community involvement and support in identifying and addressing safety issues. Ms. Cosyleon proposed the adoption of specific targets for Pueblo reducing fatalities and serious injuries and encouraged the board to ask questions and provide feedback. Councilor Flores and Commissioner Lucero expressed their appreciation for PACOG's presentation and asked for clarification on data collection and the process for sharing concerns.

### **Addressing Road Safety and Human Behavior**

There was expressed concern about the need for proactive measures to address road safety issues, particularly around schools. It was emphasized the importance of considering human behavior, such as substance abuse, in crash data analysis. It was

also suggested that every district in Colorado should have a department of risk management to prevent accidents and lawsuits.

**CDOT had a request for the following amendment projects into the FY 2025 – 2028 Pueblo Area Council of Governments Transportation Improvement Program (PACOG TIP) it is listed below.**

TIP Amend 2024.011.01 Administrative Amendment

Project Name: Mel Harmon Bridge Rehabilitation

STIP Number: SR27023.005

Project Location and Description: Rehabilitation project for the bridge on Mel Harmon to repair and restore the bridge's structure.

Fund Source(s): Bridge Off-System (BRO)

Fund Source	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Total
BRO	0	\$797,179	0	0	0	\$797,179
Local	0	\$159,435.80	0	0	0	\$159,435.80
Total	0	\$956,614.80	0	0	0	\$956,614.80

Action Required: Informational

The last of the regular items was the casting of the ballots for the vacancies in the Pueblo Regional Building Mechanical Board of Appeals and the Community Services Advisory Commission (CSAC).

There were no new business items or future item brought forward. The meeting was adjourned at 1:32pm

### Next Steps & Action Items

- **Eva Cosyleon** will present **Pueblo-specific safety targets** at the **next meeting**.
- PACOG members will submit names to **Wendy** for the **rest stop advisory committee**.
- **Eva Cosyleon** to follow up with **Diana Pike** on a **flashing four-way stop light at South Park Elementary**.
- **Eva Cosyleon** to provide **Commissioner Lucero** with **funding options for school safety projects**.
- PACOG members will escalate the **I-25 southbound entrance (Abriendo)** issue to **CDOT** for **possible restriping**.

- **Eva Cosyleon** to coordinate with the **Health Department** on a **youth safety campaign** for **prom & graduation season**.
- PACOG members to **review the PACOG 604B & Watershed Plan** before the **February meeting**.
- PACOG members to **review & comment** on the **Front Range Passenger Rail Report**.
- **Scott Hobson** will **present on the rail project** at the **February meeting**.